

Algeria opposition urges poll boycott as violence mounts

ALGIERS (AFP) — As bloodshed escalated over the weekend in Algeria, claiming more than 20 lives, two of the country's main opposition parties called for boycotts to show their rejection of next month's presidential election.

However, the two, which include the long-time ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) chose different ways to demonstrate their opposition to the poll, the first round of which takes place on November 16 and which President Liamine Zedroui is strongly tipped to win.

The Socialist Forces Front (FSF) led by Hocine Ait-Ahmad, accused the military-backed regime of wanting to "take over the votes" and called for a total boycott "using all peaceful means."

The FLN meanwhile recommended a boycott in "certain areas," while in others voters would cast blank ballots, party Secretary-General Abdul Hamid Mehri told a news conference Sunday.

Mr. Mehri said the decision to implement only a partial boycott had been taken in the light of pressures that might be applied to voters. He said the election would not take place in conditions where freedom of choice existed.

The FLN and FSF were among eight opposition parties to sign a peace proposal in Rome earlier this year, including the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), all of which have condemned the poll.

They say the election is aimed at legitimising the existing regime and will only exacerbate the current crisis.

The military-backed authorities annulled general elections three and a half years ago which the extremist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win, unleashing a wave of violence in which at least 30,000 people have been killed.

The country's most radical Islamic fundamentalist organisation, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), has used the forthcoming election to step up its campaign of terror.

This weekend, the violence which has wracked Algeria over the last few years continued unabated, as extremists shot dead 18 people Sunday in an attack on a bus near Laghouat in the south, according to police.

Fifteen others were injured as the fundamentalists stormed the bus in what

security forces described as one of the bloodiest attacks in the country's civil war.

Three small children and a woman were among the dead, a statement by the security forces said. Most wounded were children.

The bus, owned by the town's public transport system, was on its way from Chisba to Anfos, near Aflou, 250 kilometres south of Algiers.

Security forces killed four members of the commando, according to the statement. The attack carried out at 10 a.m. (0800 GMT) came as newspapers reported Sunday that two people were killed and 12 injured in two separate car bombings Saturday.

One, at Tipaza, 70 kilometres east of Algiers, aimed at a police hostel, killed two street cleaners and injured 10 other people.

The hostel was wrecked and several nearby buildings damaged.

At Dzean, near Al Tarf in the far east of Algeria, a car bomb exploded outside a police station, injuring two passers-by and damaging the building.

In a separate incident Saturday, a blast in the heart of Algiers near the central police station that officials said was caused by a gas leak, killed five people and injured 10 others, according to the Al Mujahid and Liberte dailies on Sunday. The official toll was one dead and 11 injured.

Several newspapers cast doubt on official claims that the blast was the result of an accident and suggested it had been a bombing.

Thirty fundamentalists were killed in several operations, security services said Sunday in two separate communiqués. Twenty six fundamentalists were killed in five days, said one communiqué.

In another, security services said they had killed four members of an active cell after a shootout in Chief.

The communiqué said weapons had been seized as well as documents detailing the activities of the group. The communiqué said it was known to have carried out 18 killings and several arson and sabotage attacks.

The latest deaths bring to 201 the number of fundamentalists killed over the last month, according to official communiqués. The number of police killed has not been made public.



QUAKE IN TURKEY: Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller on Monday comforts a villager watching rescue teams at work in the rubble of buildings that collapsed in an earthquake that hit the Turkish village of Dinar late Sunday (see story on page one) (AFP photo)

Craddling daughter, contented Arafat recalls 'longest revolution'

By Donna Abu Nasr
The Associated Press

RELAXING HIGH above the Atlantic, Yasser Arafat was hardly recognisable.

A blue track suit replaced the usual fatigues. Gone was the headscarf that covers the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chief's bald pate as he held his two-month-old daughter for the first time and warmly kissed her tiny hand.

It was a rare tender moment for the former guerrilla, whose political manipulations and revolutionary fervour made his name nearly synonymous with Palestine for almost three decades.

On the flight to Washington last week to sign the latest autonomy accord with Israel, Mr. Arafat ruminated on his years of being shunned by the United States, Israel and much of the world as a terrorist. Now, he appears to be nearing his goal of an independent Palestine.

Methodically folding paper tissues into perfect triangles as he spoke, Mr. Arafat said patience has been the key to what he



Yasser Arafat

termed "the longest revolution in the 20th century."

"You have to be meticulous and patient in everything you do," he told the Associated Press as the military plane made its bumpy descent into Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington.

People who know him stress other qualities too: a killer instinct and Machiavellian bent that have enabled Mr. Arafat to outlast rivals and survive dozens of assassina-

tion attempts. As long-time head of the PLO, Mr. Arafat's modus operandi has been to centralise power and ensure members of his immediate circle are not tempted to band together against him.

But last Wednesday's flight to Washington, in which he was reunited with his family, provided Mr. Arafat with a brief chance to relax. He seemed ill-at-ease in repose.

After shaking hands with everyone aboard the plane provided by Morocco's King Hassan, he changed out of his revolutionary garb and settled on a blue blanket draped over three seats.

Moments later, an aide brought over his daughter Zahwa, who he had seen only once before — for 15 minutes after her July 24 birth in Paris.

There was no expression on Mr. Arafat's face as he studied the child — whom his wife, Soha, proudly describes as similar to Mr. Arafat in both looks and fiery spirit.

Then, in a rare display of affection, Mr. Arafat took hold of her tiny hand and kissed it.

Beirut judge to question hardline Palestinian leader

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese authorities will question a Palestinian guerrilla chief accused of threatening to kill a government minister who he said described Palestinians as "human garbage," judicial sources said on Monday.

They said investigating Judge Abdullah Bitar issued a warrant ordering Colonel Munir Al Maqdash, head of a small Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) splinter faction opposed to the PLO-Israeli peace deal, to appear before him on Wednesday for questioning.

The official National News Agency (NNA) said on Saturday a Beirut prosecutor charged Col. Maqdash with threatening to kill Tourism Minister Nicholas Fattouh and slandering Interior Minister Michel Al Murr.

During a news conference at 'Ain Al Hilweh refugee camp in South Lebanon last Thursday Col. Maqdash told reporters: "We will not allow to live for 24 hours the one who calls our Palestinian people garbage."

But on Monday, Col. Maqdash said he had been misquoted.

"What I meant by my words is not a threat to one of the ministers to kill him as was attributed to me, but if the Palestinian people are garbage like the tourism minister said then he would have died himself from this garbage within 24 hours," Col. Maqdash said in a statement published by Beirut dailies.

Earlier, several Lebanese newspapers quoted Mr. Fattouh as calling Palestinians "human garbage," Mr. Fattouh denied the reports.

Col. Maqdash was also accused of slandering Mr. Murr by saying he was a "traitor" like Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi who has threatened to deport thousands of Palestinians from Libya.

Mr. Murr recently slapped entry restrictions on Palestinians with Lebanese travel documents and closed the sea transport route with Libya to prevent expelled Palestinians entering Lebanon.

Officials fail to convince UAE family to abandon call for maid's execution

ABU DHABI (R) — Officials have tried but failed to persuade the family of the man killed by Filipina maid Sarah Balabagan to drop their demand for her execution in exchange for blood money, sources close to the family said on Monday.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) officials recently approached the family of Almas Mohammad Al Baloushi at their home in the oasis town of Al 'Ain and made the offer, the sources told Reuters.

"The officials asked them about blood money and offered to pay it," one source, who asked to remain anonymous, said.

Baloushi's son Faraj, who represents the family in court, on Monday reiterated they would never back down on their demand for the death sentence to be carried out.

"Why should we ever accept blood money instead of the death sentence? She confessed to the killing and she should be executed," he said.

The blood money offer was the first sign that the government was seeking a reconciliation formula with the family in accordance with Islamic law.

An Islamic court in Al 'Ain on Sept. 16 sentenced Ms. Balabagan to death for the premeditated murder of Baloushi, her UAE employer.

It rejected her claim that she stabbed him 34 times in self-defence after wrestling his knife away during a rape.

Baloushi's family had repeatedly demanded the death sentence throughout Ms. Balabagan's trial, saying she stabbed him while he was praying.

They still have the option of accepting blood money instead of the death sentence.

according to Islamic law. But the family is sticking to their demand that she be executed.

"If Balabagan is pardoned or her sentence is reduced we will take this case to the government," said Faraj Al Baloushi.

If blood money is eventually accepted, the court will have to decide whether she will still have to serve a jail term.

The Balabagan case has stirred passions in the Philippines, reigniting furor that swept the country in March after another maid was hanged in Singapore for double murder.

Ms. Balabagan's parents and her sister are due to arrive in the UAE on Tuesday with a joint affidavit from the maid's hometown to show she was born on March 3, 1979. The UAE says she is 27, based on documents the Philippines says were forged.

Philippines embassy officials, under pressure to save Ms. Balabagan from execution, have eased diplomatic efforts to save her and are relying on defence lawyers who will begin her appeal next Monday.

"We have slowed down our diplomatic thrust to allow the case to be handled in the courts," one embassy official said.

UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan ordered a retrial after the same Al 'Ain court convicted Ms. Balabagan of manslaughter and sentenced her to seven years imprisonment. It also concluded she had been raped and awarded her compensation.

Both sides had appealed against the first court's verdict.

The UAE federal supreme court must endorse a death sentence and Sheikh Zayed must approve any execution.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Vanunu goes on hunger strike

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Jailed nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu who revealed secrets on Israel's atomic arsenal is on hunger strike against being held in solitary confinement, his support committee announced Monday. "It's been almost two years that Mordechai Vanunu is asking to be held in more humane conditions. So he started a hunger strike on Sunday," said committee member Guidoon Spiro. Mr. Vanunu, held in isolation since 1986, wants the right to receive visitors at Ashkelon prison in southern Israel, to be able to take his daily walk with other prisoners and for his mail not to be censored. Mr. Spiro said dozens of peace activists demonstrated on Saturday in front of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's house to demand the release of 40-year-old Vanunu. The supreme court is considering his appeal to be set free. He was kidnapped in Rome on Sept. 30, 1986, by agents of the Israeli secret service Mossad for revealing secrets on the state's nuclear arsenal to the British newspaper. The Sunday Times. Mr. Vanunu is serving an 18-year sentence for espionage and high treason.

Iran arrests 32 for deadly stoning attacks

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian authorities have arrested 32 people for deadly stone-throwing attacks on trains around Tehran's main railroad station, the Islamic republic's state-run television network reported. It quoted the state-owned rail network's public relations department as saying that railroad authorities will deal severely with the stone-throwers rounded up over the last two days. It said that a young man who had caused the death of a 10-year-old girl by throwing stones at trains on the line from Tehran to the northwestern city of Tabriz had been identified and arrested.

Palestinian guerrilla killed in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (R) — A Palestinian faction said on Monday one of its guerrillas was killed in a clash on Sunday with Israeli forces in South Lebanon. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command said in a statement one of its fighters was killed when Israeli forces in Arnoun in Israel's South Lebanon occupation zone fired artillery shells at the guerrillas outside the strip. The Damascus-based group said the Israeli shelling was prompted by an attack by its fighters on an Israeli patrol using anti-tank rockets and machineguns, which killed or wounded a number of soldiers.



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Vienna - Amman	Mon, Sat	dep.	arr.
		10:10	15:00

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PROGRAMME TWO
14:00 Captain Planet
14:30 M.A.N.T.I.S.
15:00 Mountain Men
16:00 Families
17:00 Children's Programme — Les Mondes Enluminés
17:30 Montaigne
17:50 Varieties — Taratou
18:00 News in French
19:15 Fast Pas Revue
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 You Bet Your Life
20:00 The Secrets of Treasure Island
20:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
21:15 Drama — True Blue
22:00 News in English
22:25 Trade Winds (Part III)
23:30 Feature: "Operation War Zone"
23:59 Grace Under Fire
00:30 Varieties

PRAYER TIMES

04:09 Fajr
05:26 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:25 Asr
14:47 Maghreb
18:41 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Switzerland, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 628266
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Cold weather conditions are expected to prevail with temperatures dropping further. Skies will be cloudy to partly cloudy and winds westerly active with a chance of showers particularly in the north and central parts of the Kingdom. In Aqaba, skies will be partly cloudy, winds southerly active, and seas rough.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 13/22
Aqaba 20/29
Distrs 11/25
Jordan Valley 18/28

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 26, Aqaba 35, Humidity readings: Amman 57 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Mukhlis Halasa 819220
Dr. Fayed Dahbas 759155
Dr. Araruf Al Ashhab 602907
Dr. Munther Al Qatani 884286
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Najrouk pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsani pharmacy 637660
Najrouk pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Fayez Al Qadi 248743
Alquds pharmacy (-)
ZARQA:
Dr. Fahed Jaber 945449

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Central Amman Telephone 896390
Public Security Department 630521
Hotel Complaints 661176
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 774111
Radio Jordan 661100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53301
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381/332
Khalifeh Maternity, J. Ann. 644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Ann. 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642363
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmouani 664171/4
Shmouani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mushter Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 664164/6
Al-Ahli, Abdali 775112/6
Italian, Al-Mahajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775112/6
Army, Marfa 891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 686100
Amal Hospital 607155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)909090
IRBID:
Princess Basmah Hospital (02)755555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)722728
Ibn Al-Nafas Hospital (02)347100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

03:10 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:00 Damascus (RJ)
07:45 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:15 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
09:35 Beirut (RJ)
09:50 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
16:30 London (RJ)
16:45 Cairo (RJ)
16:40 Frankfurt (RJ)
17:25 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
03:30 Vienna (OS)
06:45 Cairo (MS)
13:00 Munich (YPI)
13:00 Riyadh (SV)
13:20 Rome (AZ)
17:45 Khartoum (SD)
18:15 Dubai (EK)

DEPARTURES Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:40 Beirut (RJ)
07:00 Aqaba (RJ)
08:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:10 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
11:15 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
11:45 Geneva, Brussels (RJ)
12:15 Cairo (RJ)
13:05 London (RJ)
13:25 Madrid (RJ)
20:05 Larnaca (RJ)
20:20 Jeddah (RJ)
20:45 Damascus (RJ)
21:20 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
21:30 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
05:30 Damascus, Paris (AF)
09:45 Cairo (MS)
12:40 Vienna (OS)
13:55 Sharm Al Sheikh, Munich (YP)
14:30 Damascus (AZ)
14:30 Riyadh (SV)
19:00 Khartoum (SD)
19:15 Dubai (EK)
21:00 Aden (DY)
00:30 Amsterdam (KL)
00:55 Bucharest (RO)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 650/450
Banana 680
Banana (Mukammal) 620
Cabbage 200/150
Carrot 440/340
Cauliflower (large) 320/220
Cucumbers (large) 200/130
Cucumbers (small) 300/230
Eggplant 280/190
Garlic 700/500
Grapes 720/500
Guava 600/500
Lemon 270/200
Marrow (large) 180/100
Marrow (small) 340/200
Mushrooms 300/130
Okra 900/750
Onion (dry) 230/180
Orange 500/400
Pepper (hot) 240/180
Pepper (sweet) 280/180
Pomegranate 360/260
Potato 290/200
Spinach 300/200
String Beans R50/450
Tomato 1100/80



ing to Islamic law. The family is sticking to their demand that she be executed. The sentence is reduced to life imprisonment in this case to the court. "said Faraj al-Shi."

local money is eventually accepted, the court will have to serve a jail sentence.

Balabagan case has a long history in the Philippines. The country in March 1994, another maid was executed in Singapore for murdering her employer.

Balabagan's parents and her sister are due to appear in the UAE on Tuesday with a joint affidavit to show that she was born on March 1, 1971. The UAE says she was based on documents the Philippines says were forged. The UAE says she was under pressure to see Balabagan from execution. The UAE says she was under pressure to see Balabagan from execution.

We have slowed down diplomatic thrust to allow case to be handled in the courts, one embassy official said.

IAF President Sheikh Yusef Ben Sultan said he ordered a retrial of the same Al-Amri case. He said he ordered a retrial of the same Al-Amri case. He said he ordered a retrial of the same Al-Amri case.

The UAE federal supreme court must endorse a decision and Sheikh Zayed must approve any execution.

BRIEF

Jer strike

Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque is at the center of a new wave of violence. The mosque is a holy site for Muslims and Jews. The mosque is a holy site for Muslims and Jews. The mosque is a holy site for Muslims and Jews.

Ily stoning attacks

Stoning attacks in the West Bank have increased. The attacks are a violation of international law. The attacks are a violation of international law. The attacks are a violation of international law.

killed in Lebanon

At least 10 people were killed in a suicide bombing in Lebanon. The bombing was carried out by a militant group. The bombing was carried out by a militant group. The bombing was carried out by a militant group.

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

A train carrying pilgrims was derailed in Saudi Arabia. The train was carrying pilgrims from Hajj. The train was carrying pilgrims from Hajj. The train was carrying pilgrims from Hajj.

MARKET PRICES

Apple 1.20, Banana 0.80, Orange 1.50, Lemon 1.00, Tomato 0.50, Potato 0.30, Onion 0.40, Cucumber 0.60, Eggplant 0.70, Zucchini 0.80, Carrot 0.90, Broccoli 1.10, Cauliflower 1.20, Spinach 1.30, Lettuce 1.40, Cabbage 1.50, Pumpkin 1.60, Melon 1.70, Watermelon 1.80, Strawberry 1.90, Raspberry 2.00, Blueberry 2.10, Blackberry 2.20, Elderberry 2.30, Huckleberry 2.40, Mulberry 2.50, Goji berry 2.60, Acai berry 2.70, Pomegranate 2.80, Dragon fruit 2.90, Jackfruit 3.00, Durian 3.10, Rambutan 3.20, Lychee 3.30, Mango 3.40, Peach 3.50, Nectarine 3.60, Plum 3.70, Cherry 3.80, Apricot 3.90, Almond 4.00, Pistachio 4.10, Walnut 4.20, Pecan 4.30, Macadamia 4.40, Cashew 4.50, Brazil nut 4.60, Pine nut 4.70, Sunflower seed 4.80, Pumpkin seed 4.90, Flax seed 5.00, Chia seed 5.10, Hemp seed 5.20, Sesame seed 5.30, Sunflower seed 5.40, Pumpkin seed 5.50, Flax seed 5.60, Chia seed 5.70, Hemp seed 5.80, Sesame seed 5.90, Sunflower seed 6.00, Pumpkin seed 6.10, Flax seed 6.20, Chia seed 6.30, Hemp seed 6.40, Sesame seed 6.50, Sunflower seed 6.60, Pumpkin seed 6.70, Flax seed 6.80, Chia seed 6.90, Hemp seed 7.00, Sesame seed 7.10, Sunflower seed 7.20, Pumpkin seed 7.30, Flax seed 7.40, Chia seed 7.50, Hemp seed 7.60, Sesame seed 7.70, Sunflower seed 7.80, Pumpkin seed 7.90, Flax seed 8.00, Chia seed 8.10, Hemp seed 8.20, Sesame seed 8.30, Sunflower seed 8.40, Pumpkin seed 8.50, Flax seed 8.60, Chia seed 8.70, Hemp seed 8.80, Sesame seed 8.90, Sunflower seed 9.00, Pumpkin seed 9.10, Flax seed 9.20, Chia seed 9.30, Hemp seed 9.40, Sesame seed 9.50, Sunflower seed 9.60, Pumpkin seed 9.70, Flax seed 9.80, Chia seed 9.90, Hemp seed 10.00.

Home News

Jordan Times, Tuesday, October 3, 1995

3

Queen delivers keynote address at first Middle East business women's conference

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday delivered the keynote address at the first Middle East business women's conference entitled, "Going International: Career Women and Business," organised by the Middle East Consultants (MEC) in London, a Royal Court statement said.

The two-day conference, sponsored by the European Commission, the Arab British Chamber of Commerce and Royal Jordanian Airline, covers a variety of topics ranging from new business opportunities in a changing world and effective image projection, to post-Beijing development and the media's perception of women.

The speakers at the MEC conference include British Member of Parliament Emma Nicholson, Chairman of the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce Sir Richard Beaumont, Secretary General of the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women Gertrude Mongella, Egypt's Minister of Social Development Dr. Amal Othman and the Jordanian founder of the Middle East Career Women Forum Sherrine Dajani, the statement said.

During the opening ceremony, former British Ambassador to Jordan Sir John Moberly praised "the distinguished role of the Queen in directing and sponsoring projects and activities related to the fields of social welfare, mother and child health care, culture, education and women's development" saying that her role is "well-known and highly esteemed" in Jordan and internationally.

In her speech, Queen Noor noted that the first Middle Eastern business women's conference is being convened only two weeks after the Beijing conference, whose 30,000 delegates constituted the largest gathering of women in the history of the United Nations, the statement said.

The dual message of the Beijing conference, according to Queen Noor, focused on "the rights and dignity of women" as well as on "the rights and dignity of countries and cultures."

She said she hoped that the deliberations of the MEC conference will emphasise not only women's opportunities,



rights, education, training and access to basic social and economic services but also called for a new global framework to produce a "more humane and equitable political and economic foundation upon which to build productive and sustainable relationships."

According to the statement, Queen Noor observed that the remarkable advances in female education in the Middle East have significantly increased the number of business and professional women, whose "enhanced economic role has helped, in turn, to create new jobs and to boost their participation in decision-making and national affairs."

The statement added that the Queen stressed that Islam has been one of Jordan's greatest allies in the development of numerous projects and initiatives to accelerate women's participation in productive economic ventures, because it "recognises and protects women's property rights and exhorts Muslims — men and women alike — to seek education."

She attributed the progress of women in Jordan to two fundamental principles, equity and participation, which are "as relevant to relations between countries at the global level as they are to individuals at the local or national levels."

Queen Noor concluded her speech saying that the aim of such international gatherings is to heighten

the participants' awareness of the realities, needs, and aspirations of their colleagues and encouraged the MEC participants to keep abreast of developments related to the Middle East and North Africa Economic summit in Amman, which will have a substantial impact on international business prospects in the region.

She expressed her hope that the conference will provide Middle Eastern business women with opportunities to make an essential contribution to the global economy.

The MEC, founded in 1983, is a private organisation specialising in strengthening economic and commercial ties and cooperation between Europe and the Middle East.

Its diverse services include project development, political and economic assessment, assisting companies' entry to new markets and organising international conferences in Europe, Asia and the Middle East on critical issues such as water, the future of gas and the role of private enterprises in the United Nations.

The MEC is planning to hold the sequel to the business women's conference in Amman next year and to launch a forum for career women around the globe.

Visiting Bundestag official says Germany fully backs Middle East peace process

AMMAN (Petra) — Visiting Vice President of the German Parliament (Bundestag) Hans Klein, who Monday met with Jordanian parliamentarians to discuss Middle East peace and bilateral relations, said that Germany fully backs the peace process.

The Middle East peace process should be backed by all available means so that it can achieve a just and comprehensive settlement, said Mr. Klein adding that one should have an optimistic view on the peace era.

Voicing appreciation of the Jordanian government and people's efforts towards peace and development, Mr. Klein, who is accompanied by a representative delegation of all political streams in the Bundestag, said Jordanians are unique among the other people of the region because of their high standard of education.

Mr. Klein, who arrived in Amman Sunday evening for a six-day visit, said Germany appreciates the role of His Majesty King Hussein in promoting democratic life in Jordan and in seeking a just and durable peace adding that his country would offer all that it can to back the Kingdom's endeavours for peace.

Mr. Klein met with Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Lawzi, who voiced Jordan's appre-



Deputy Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Hadi Majali and House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Abdullah Ensour Monday meet with visiting Vice President of the German Parliament Hans Klein and an accompanying parliamentary delegation (Petra photo).

ciation of German assistance to the Kingdom in all fields. Mr. Lawzi reviewed with Mr. Klein the ongoing peace process and Jordanian-German relations.

At a meeting with Chairman of the Lower House of

Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee Abdullah Ensour, the two parliamentarians discussed the peace process. Dr. Ensour urged Germany and the other European countries to support

the peace process and help end the disparities in the standard of living between the people of Israel and the Arab people around the Jewish state. Mr. Klein and his delegation met also with Abdul

Hadi Majali, deputy speaker of House, to review Jordanian parliamentary life and to learn about the country's democratic march. Speaker Sa'ad Hayel Srour is on an official visit to Moscow.

Princess Basma announces establishment of women's committee for southern Jordan Valley

GHOR SAFI (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday visited Ghor Safi in the southern part of the country and announced the establishment of a women's committee for the southern Jordan Valley region.

Speaking at a meeting with representatives of women's unions and local officials, the Princess said the committee will organise and promote the potentials of local women and increase their participation in public life.

Referring to municipal councils which group women members, the Princess said she takes pride in their efforts to serve their local communities.

There is a need to pursue these efforts to ensure the success of the Jordanian

women's experiment in the councils' activities and women's work alongside men, especially in helping to improve the conditions of rural communities, said Princess Basma.

She discussed Jordanian women's participation in the World Conference on Women held recently in Beijing and said that they were active in the various workshops and general meetings. Princess Basma added that the women displayed deep self-confidence and genuine interest in helping to improve the women's status.

The Princess later took part in an open dialogue about rural women's needs.

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Nader Thuheirat and other officials were present at the meeting.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday discusses promoting the potential of women in public life at a meeting with local officials in Ghor Safi (Petra photo).

Meeting focuses on water consumption safety, protection of sustainable ecosystem

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irshaidat Monday opened a four-day meeting on water management by calling for regional cooperation in water shortages.

Regional cooperation is the only way to assist countries with short water supplies, Mr. Irshaidat said.

Cooperation also helps to minimise tensions over water in the region, the minister said in his address to the Expert Group Meeting on the Implications of Agenda 21 for Integrated Water Management in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) region.

Agenda 21 is in reference to the agenda of the next century.

Jordan is working hard to implement the water agreement of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, the minister said.

He added that the joint water committee has been working on provisions contained in the water agreements starting with the South Tiberias-King Abdullah canal pipeline.

On the national level, there are many activities in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation that need to be implemented such as the establishment of a national water policy, updating the

water master plan and carrying out a conservation and national public awareness campaign, Mr. Irshaidat said.

ESCWA Executive Secretary Hazem Belbawi addressed the opening session to say that the meeting was dedicated to discussing issues which deal with the quality and supply of fresh water and the management and use of water resources.

The general purpose of the meeting, he said, is to provide safe water to the population while ensuring the sustainable efficiency of the hydrological, biological and chemical factors of the natural ecosystem.

ESCWA secretariat has prepared three working papers on the assessment and control of water quality, with special emphasis on the problems of the increasing salinity of groundwater, according to Mr. Belbawi.

Habib Hibr, representative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which organised the meeting with ESCWA, said delegates will concentrate their discussions on the concept of integrated management of water resources and on preparing integrated plans suitable for each of the countries in the region.

According to an ESCWA

statement the meeting will also review progress in the planning, development and management of water resources and ways of attaining optimal use of available water resources.

The meeting aims to disseminate detailed information on Agenda 21 and on issues which focus on freshwater resources, the statement said.

Participating in the meeting are government-designated delegates from 12 countries in Western Asia along with UN specialists on water affairs.

Regent

(Continued from page 12)

teachers' abilities and the educational process is a must so that Arabs can meet the requirements and the challenges of the coming 21st century."

"Isolationism and closeness to the outside world and sectarian and ethnic considerations are elements for regression that should be shunned as they would never help the Arab World to progress," the Regent warned.

"Adaptation with the requirements of the modern age and development of education and teachers' capabilities are essential elements for improving social conditions and dealing with such issues as poverty and unemployment of different sorts," said the Prince, who stressed the need for linking educa-

tion with the requirements of local labour markets.

The Regent said that no changes or reforms were possible if the whole task of reform was shouldered by the government. He said that reform and changes should start from the base and through the efforts of teachers and educators.

University of Jordan President Fawzi Gharatibeh addressed the opening session, underlining the importance of the pan-Arab conference as a means for exploring the future requirements of education.

In the first working session, Prince Hassan and the audience listened to a lecture by Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh entitled "The Challenges of Arab Education in the Coming Century."

The Regent also took part in the subsequent dialogue

over the different points of the lecture, which focused attention on the central role of teachers in education.

Prince Hassan also presented certificates to veteran educationists in the Arab World in recognition of their efforts to develop the educational systems of their countries.

Later on Monday, the Regent chaired a meeting at the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) on topics related to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference to be held here later this month.

Present at the meeting were His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, His Majesty King Hussein's military secretary, acting Prime Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh and other officials including the minister of information and other Cabinet members.

WHAT'S GOING ON

SEMINAR

"The Art of Photography" by critic Adnan Hussein at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Arts, Gardens Street at 6.30 pm.

FAIR

* Display of Algerian products at Amman International Exhibit at Marj Al Hamam (11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.)

EXHIBITIONS

* Photography exhibition "Islam in Spain" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman
* Abstract art by the Syrian artist Mohammad Daghestani at the Phoenix Gallery.
* Jordanian-Syrian-Turkish products at King Abdullah Gardens, Al Bassam Hall.
* Works by Lamia Abdel Sahib and Samer Ousama entitled "Aux Sources Orientales de la Fontaine," at the French Cultural Centre.

Ministry seeks international assistance in waste disposal

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources is seeking international assistance from oil-producing countries to help it dispose of waste residues resulting from the burning of oil at the Zarka refinery, according to its minister, Samih Darwazah.

Speaking Monday upon his return to Amman after

attending a conference on energy held in Venezuela, Mr. Darwazah said the ministry is seeking assistance in a bid to protect the country from pollution.

He said discussions on this issue were held with ministers attending the four-day conference that ended on Sept. 28.

Ministers responsible for energy and oil from more

than 40 countries taking part in the meeting discussed the issue of sulphur disposal and nitrogen oxide waste and their adverse effects on the environment.

Delegates representing both oil-producing and oil-consuming countries discussed means of utilising modern technology to deal with this problem, Mr. Darwazah said.

During the conference the minister discussed the supplies of liquefied gas to Jordan from Qatar with that country's oil minister.

The Qatari minister said that his government is still conducting studies in cooperation with an American company on the best means of supplying Jordan with the liquefied gas, Mr. Darwazah said.

Talks were also held with the Algerian oil minister focusing on bilateral cooperation in gas and oil related affairs, according to the minister.

Mr. Darwazah said he also met with the Saudi oil minister and discussed Saudi gas supplies to Jordan but declined to give further details.

Colombo mounts big offensive against rebels

COLOMBO (AFP) — Heavy hand-to-hand battles raged in northern Sri Lanka Monday as the military launched a major offensive against Tamil rebels, losing at least 12 soldiers in the initial fighting, defence officials said.

Thousands of soldiers from the Palaly military complex in the Jaffna peninsula advanced towards positions of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who were providing stiff resistance, said military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe.

Defence sources said at least 12 soldiers were killed and about 50 to 60 troops

wounded. Most of the army casualties were caused by mortar bombs fired by the LTTE, defence sources said, adding the military offensive was aimed at taking out the rebel gun positions, which had been used in recent weeks to attack the airfield at Palaly.

The rebels' clandestine radio, the Voice of Tigers, said six civilians were killed and 53 wounded in the army action but this could not be independently confirmed. It said no rebels had been killed.

The offensive began Sunday and troops had reached Atchchuvelli to the southeast of Palaly.

"Troops are now dominating in Atchchuvelli which they re-took from the terrorists. There are lot of terrorist casualties and we are in the process of taking stock now," a defence source said.

The LTTE said that 5,000 ground troops were involved in the army's advance and claimed that thousands of civilians were fleeing the battle zone and seeking refuge in the western part of the peninsula.

"Aerial and artillery bombardments are being extensively used to pave the way for the ground troops to advance... LTTE fighters are giving stiff resistance in order to halt the military

advance," the LTTE said in a separate statement issued from its London office Monday.

An offensive in Jaffna had been expected before the onset of monsoon rains which make prolonged fighting more difficult for both sides.

Heavy rains prevent the use of main battle tanks on muddy terrain but also make the crude locally-made anti-personnel mines ineffective when water gets into the battery operated triggering devices.

The Voice of Tigers said the army had some 35,000 soldiers stationed inside the sprawling Palaly military

complex to mount an even bigger offensive before the end of the year.

The Tiger remarks came as Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte told a meeting with the Buddhist clergy Sunday that the war with the Tamil Tigers would be fought to a finish within three months.

The Tamil Tigers are leading a protracted campaign for an independent homeland for the island's Tamil minority concentrated in the northern and eastern regions. More than 50,000 people have died in the 23-year-old conflict.

Hundreds of Kashmir rebels die in factional fighting

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Hundreds of Muslim guerrillas have died in Kashmir in internecine clashes, and the scores of heavily armed rebel groups continue to battle it out for supremacy.

Heavily-armed guerrilla groups frequently train their guns on each other, and virtually every one of the dozens of militant groups has suffered splits since a Muslim insurgency erupted in the northern Indian state in 1989.

It is a development which immensely pleases the Indian authorities, who have deployed tens of thousands of army and paramilitary troops to fight militants. New Delhi claims are armed and trained by neighbouring Pakistan.

Kashmir's leading pro-independence group, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), broke up last month after its Srinagar-based President

Yasin Malik and Pakistan-based Chairman Amanullah Khan expelled each other.

The military commanders of the rival JKLF factions immediately denounced each other as Indian agents.

The emergence of renegade militant leader Nuka Parry, who is dubbed an Indian stooge by other Muslim separatist groups, as a force to reckon with in recent months has further complicated the situation in Kashmir.

"All militant outfits are concerned about the present situation," said Ali Shah Geelani, chairman of the Jamiat-E-Islami, whose military arm, the Hizbul Mujahadeen, is Kashmir's dominant guerrilla group.

"(The factional fighting) is a matter of concern," he said. Muslim sources blame the Hizb for most of the internecine battles, which have claimed the lives of an estimated 900 militants since 1989.

A Muslim leader said on

condition of anonymity that 207 guerrillas were killed in factional fighting in 1993, 311 in 1994 and 165 so far this year.

The Hizbul Mujahadeen and the JKLF were locked in fierce gunbattles in 1992 and 1993 in Srinagar and all over the Kashmir Valley, and the former eventually came out on top. The Hizb has also attacked almost all other groups, in particular the Muslim Mujahadeen and Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen.

Most clashes have been sparked by ideological and personality differences. The JKLF favours independence for Kashmir, which is held by both India and Pakistan, while the Hizb and most other militant groups want Indian Kashmir to merge with Pakistan.

Jamiat's Geelani dismissed charges that the Hizb had sparked factional feuds. "The Hizb has not initiated any of the fighting," he said. "When other

groups attack it, the Hizb is compelled to retaliate."

Mr. Parry, 47, who heads the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen group and has his headquarters at Hajin, some 40 kilometres from Srinagar, has vowed to finish off the Hizb.

Indian officials say one reason a large number of Islamic mercenaries, mainly Afghans, were crossing into Kashmir from Pakistan was because local militants had become weak due to internecine clashes and the pressure exerted by Indian troops.

A Kashmir official said the factional fighting was nothing surprising.

"This was a natural thing to happen considering the number of (militant) groups here," said Kashmir government spokesman Kulbushan Jindiyal. "Some want to join Pakistan, some want complete independence."

"What else could one expect?"

Mkhedroni, who were once no less feared.

Mr. Iosseliani was the most powerful member of the coalition of warlords that installed Mr. Shevardnadze in power in 1992.

In the years that followed, Mr. Shevardnadze allowed the Mkhedroni to set up as the de facto authority in local governments across the republic.

But earlier this year Mr. Shevardnadze began to strengthen the Internal Affairs Ministry presence in the provinces. In April he ordered the Mkhedroni dismissed.

Since the August bombing, the Mkhedroni have also been battered by arrests of their top level people, and Mr. Iosseliani was forced to abandon his presidential bid.

Mr. Iosseliani himself, however, has not been charged with any wrongdoing, although drugs and weapons were found in his office following the August attack.

The sudden fall of the ex-KGB leaders has been matched by the fall of the

corps, he said the Internal Affairs Ministry deserved "special credit for exposing these notorious acts."

Mr. Shevardnadze himself ran Georgia's Internal Affairs Ministry in the 1970's before becoming the Communist Party boss of the then Soviet Republic of Georgia and seems comfortable placing power in the hands of that ministry's regular police.

The security service, as the ex-KGB is known, was crippled by top-level arrests in the weeks following the August attack, but the charges against Mr. Giorgadze now seem to make the downfall of its leadership complete.

Mr. Giorgadze, is believed to be in Moscow, where he fled shortly after being dismissed following the August attack.

Mr. Shevardnadze said Sunday that Moscow prosecutors have promised to extradite Mr. Giorgadze if he is found.

The sudden fall of the ex-KGB leaders has been matched by the fall of the

Shevardnadze tightens grip on power in Georgia

TBILISI — (AFP) — Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze has tightened his grip on power this week in the runup to November presidential elections by effectively eliminating two of the three competing armed organisations.

The former balance of power in Georgia, between the police, the ex-KGB and the Mkhedroni, a paramilitary organisation that had semi-official status as the "rescue corps," is now ended.

In a dramatic address Sunday, Mr. Shevardnadze accused the Mkhedroni and the ex-KGB of harbouring a clique of coup plotters responsible for a wave of assassinations that culminated with a failed car bomb attack on Mr. Shevardnadze himself on Aug. 29.

A warrant has been made out for the arrest of Igor Giorgadze, the former chief of the ex-KGB, now accused of masterminding the plot. And Mr. Shevardnadze branded the rescue corps a "refuge for criminal elements" and

ordered it disbanded.

The person who appears to have profited most from the campaign is Internal Affairs Minister Shota Kviraya, who has authority over the regular police.

With his rivals eliminated, Mr. Kviraya has emerged uncontested as Georgia's most powerful minister.

Mr. Shevardnadze appears convinced of Mr. Kviraya's loyalty, although opponents call the police chief ruthless.

The Mkhedroni boss, Dzhaba Iosseliani publicly accused Mr. Kviraya of personally carrying out the battlefield execution of six looters during the 1993 war with separatists in Abkhazia. Western journalists who say they were present at that incident claim they had their videotape confiscated.

In the days after the August bombing attack, the internal affairs minister was constantly seen by Mr. Shevardnadze's side.

In Mr. Shevardnadze's speech Sunday denouncing the ex-KGB and the rescue

Murayama faces strident attack in parliament

TOKYO (R) — Japan's opposition Monday stepped up demands for Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama's resignation over what it called poor election results for his Socialist Party and the government's inept handling of the economy.

"Japan's citizens have made a clear expression of no confidence in the Murayama administration," opposition leader Tsutomu Hata told parliament.

"The right way to take responsibility is to quit," said Mr. Hata. Mr. Murayama's predecessor as prime minister and a senior leader of the opposition Shinshinto (New Frontier Party).

But Mr. Murayama vowed to stay at the helm of what he last week christened the "government of economic recovery."

"We will continue to maintain the coalition and implement reform and responsible policies," Mr. Murayama told parliament in answer to the criticism.

Mr. Murayama's coalition

of Socialists, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Sakigake party retains a majority in both houses of parliament — even though the electorate dealt each of the parties an embarrassing blow in last July's upper house polls.

Mr. Hata's attack on the government opened the parliamentary question-and-answer session at the start of a 46-day extraordinary diet session.

The focus of the session is a five trillion Yen (\$50 billion) supplementary budget, the largest extra budget to be submitted in Japan's parliament.

The budget forms part of a 14.2 trillion Yen (\$142 billion) package of economic measures. Murayama unveiled earlier this month, which includes additional public works spending and funds for infrastructure and research in new industries.

In addition to blasting Murayama's 15-month-old government for clinging to power, Mr. Hata faulted the administration for taking only half-measures on the

economy. "Government economic measures stop at mere treatments," he said, echoing economists' criticism that Mr. Murayama's wobbly coalition has not taken the drastic reform measures necessary to cure Japan's economic ills.

Mr. Hata called for bolder steps to deal with financial institutions' bad loans and more efforts to overhaul the tax system and cut government red tape.

By stressing tax reform and deregulation, Shinshinto is seeking to seize the high ground on reform steps that experts say are necessary for Japan to end its prolonged recession but which the ruling coalition is bitterly divided over.

But there are also internal divisions within Shinshinto over the issue and that makes the 10-month-old conservative opposition body vulnerable.

Even if the opposition and ruling camps cooperate on economic policy, analysts expect the two sides to

come to blows over the administration's proposed bill to tighten government control on religious groups.

The bills were ostensibly drafted in response to the fatal gasings, kidnappings and other criminal acts allegedly committed by the doomsday Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth Sect).

But Shinshinto leaders say the LDP-inspired bill is an underhand attempt to reign in the lay Buddhist group Soka Gakkai, whose nationwide network supports the opposition.

"Moves to revise the religious organisation law are extremely political and come from extremely impure motives," said Mr. Hata.

Also looming as an explosive issue is debate over the U.S.-Japan security relationship amid mounting public anger over the rape last month of a young Okinawan schoolgirl, allegedly by U.S. servicemen stationed on the southern Japanese island.

Burmese envoy says talks with Suu Kyi not needed

BANGKOK (AFP) — The Burmese ambassador to Thailand said talks on political reforms between Burma's military government and dissident democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi were unnecessary, a local newspaper said Monday.

The government's National Convention was formed for the purpose of drafting a new constitution and would have sole responsibility for political reform.

Ambassador Tin Winn told the Bangkok Post. "As the process is going very smoothly, we don't need dialogue with anybody," he was cited as saying. Embassy officials said the interview had taken place but they could not immediately confirm what had been discussed.

The junta's first Secretary, Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, last month told U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright that talks with Ms. Suu Kyi, released from almost six years of house arrest in July, were being considered.

Gen. Khin Nyunt has accepted an invitation from the Thai embassy in Rangoon to pay an official visit to Thailand, but the trip has not yet been scheduled, Burmese embassy officials said.

The National Convention would resume deliberations on Oct. 24, the Burmese embassy said. Opposition leaders have said that those voicing alternatives to the draft constitution are suppressed both inside and outside the convention.

Qualified civilians would be eligible to serve as the next president, but the military would hold one of two vice-presidential posts even though it did not have a party, Mr. Tin Winn told the Bangkok Post.

"It is not true that the president must have a military background, but must have military knowledge," because the country needed a strong government to unite 155 minority groups, the newspaper cited him as saying.

Under the draft constitution, marriage to a foreigner disqualifies a Burmese citizen from serving as president, eliminating from contention Ms. Suu Kyi, whose National League for Democracy (NLD) swept nationwide elections in 1990.

The ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council refused to recognise the results and hand over power until a new constitution ensuring a role for the military in politics was in place. Most of the NLD leadership was arrested.



Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia (left) distributes cooked rice to a group of flood victims during an unscheduled visit to some of the flood shelters in worst-hit northern Dinajpur district (AFP photo)

Bangladesh troops deployed as floods kill more than 100

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Troops were deployed in Bangladesh to rescue millions of people trapped by floods that have killed more than 100 people in the last five days, newspapers said Monday.

At least 20 deaths were reported by Sangbad newspaper which quoted residents of the inundated villages and towns.

But the government said they could confirm only 17 deaths since Wednesday. Wide gaps between official and newspaper figures are common in Bangladesh, where the government is slow in releasing number of fatalities.

The floods in the northern districts, caused by heavy rains, have affected more than 3 million people, said Harun Al Rashid, the junior minister for disaster and relief. One-third of them were trapped in their flooded homes, unable to move to safer places, he said in an interview.

Troops in speed boats will try to ferry the hardest-hit villagers to safer places, he

said. The military was called in after Prime Minister Khaleda Zia visited the flood-affected areas, 190 kilometres north of Dhaka Sunday.

Road links between the capital, Dhaka, and at least nine worst-affected districts have been cut off because swirling flood waters washed away several high-way bridges. The Bengali-language Janakantha newspaper said.

Some parts of Gaibandha, Naogaon and Santahar districts went under up to one metre of water and many residents fled and took shelter on the highways and atop flood embankments.

Angered by slow supply of relief material, like food and medicines, about 500 people attacked and ransacked a government office in Dinajpur district Sunday, Janakantha newspaper said.

This is the third spate of floods in northern Bangladesh this year. More than 200 people were killed in the earlier floods.

Philippine storm kills 100, scores missing

SAN FERNANDO, Philippines (R) — At least 100 people were killed and 100 others missing after tropical storm Sybil battered the Philippines, swamping towns and triggering mudflows and landslides, rescuers said Monday.

Relief officials said they feared the death toll would rise once reports were received from areas cut off from the capital Manila by a breakdown in power and communications.

Hardest hit was the northern town of Cabalan in Pangasinan province, where more than 50 people died after the storm ravaged it with floods and mudflows as high as six metres at the weekend, a local official said.

The dead included two members of a seven-man rescue team swamped by mud falls Sunday night while trying to help families stranded on the roofs of their houses, he said. The five other rescue team members are among the missing.

Another 18 people were crushed to death by landslides in the mountainous Ifugao province further north, rescuers said. More than 30 others were killed elsewhere in the country, including 18 whose houses were buried in landslides in the remote southern town of Valencia on Mindanao Island.

The storm, with winds of 95 kilometres an hour near its centre, battered 30 provinces and 20 cities as it churned up the entire

length of the country, wrecking hundreds of homes and knocking out power and communications in many areas.

The storm turned Cabalan into a virtual wasteland, with most structures buried in the mudflows from nearby Mount Pinatubo volcano, Ananias Canlas, mayor of the neighbouring town of Bacolor north of Manila, told reporters after an aerial survey.

About 8,000 Cabalan residents fled to the roofs of their houses Sunday to escape the mud falls and the floods, the state-owned Philippine News Agency said.

The mudflows consist of tonnes of debris dumped on Pinatubo's slopes by its violent 1991 eruption. The deposits turn into deadly rivers of mud when loosened by rains.

About 20 typhoons and storms hit the Philippines every year, making mudflows a regular menace to communities near Pinatubo.

Sybil moved out of the country early Monday morning, heading towards the southern coast of China.

Defence Secretary Renato De Villa described the devastation as "a major disaster."

He said he expected President Fidel Ramos, who was to return later Monday from an overnight visit to Malaysia, to declare a state of emergency in the badly hit areas.

Fergie and her prince ready to try again — paper

LONDON (R) — "Fergie" the fallen duchess and her estranged husband Prince Andrew are in love again and ready to get back together, bucking a trend of marital splits among Britain's royals and VIPs, Monday's Sun newspaper said. "They are now closer than they have ever been since they split up," it quoted an unnamed royal official as saying. The Sun said the couple, who married in 1986 but separated in 1992 — followed a few months later by Prince Andrew's brother, Prince Charles, and his wife, Princess Diana — were on the brink of resuming married life. The couple had enjoyed a secret holiday together in Spain — "like our honeymoon but better", the duchess was quoted as saying — and were spending up to four nights a week in each other's company, the tabloid said. It is unclear whether a reconciliation would please the royal establishment, which grew hostile to Prince Andrew's wife Sarah — her nickname comes from her maiden name, Ferguson — after she was deemed too frivolous and lightweight to be a royal. The couple have two daughters, seven-year-old Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie, aged five. For heir to the throne Prince Charles and Princess Diana, reconciliation seems a faint prospect. Most Britons think they should divorce and put their marriage out of its misery, according to a weekend poll conducted after Princess Diana was blamed in the media for helping wreck the marriage of popular rugby hero Will Carling. In an article next to the Prince Andrew and Fergie good-news story on the Sun's front page, Carling said he had been naive and stupid over his friendship with Princess Diana. It has been a bad few months for Britain's most glamorous partnerships. Kenneth Branagh and Emma Thompson, the country's golden acting couple, said this weekend they were separating and in the summer, actor Hugh Grant's arrest with a Hollywood prostitute put his relationship with supermodel Liz Hurley in jeopardy.

Danish police arrest jailbreak mastermind

COPENHAGEN (R) — Danish police arrested in a remote farmhouse the presumed mastermind behind a spectacular mass jailbreak one month ago when a bulldozer smashed a hole in the prison wall. Lars Hinchinson, dubbed the "escape king" by the media because he has broken out of jail eight times, was arrested along with a fellow fugitive and convicted murderer, police inspector Anders Eg said. Mr. Hinchinson, a 31-year-old narcotics trader, was arrested with Steen Reinholdt, 28, outside Viborg in northwestern Jutland after a tipoff from neighbours.

Mussolini was mad about Mickey Mouse

ROME (R) — Italy's stern fascist dictator Benito Mussolini was mad about Mickey Mouse, hailed Snow White And The Seven Dwarves as a masterpiece and sang Disney songs to his children at home, according to his son Romano. The dictator, dubbed "Il Duce", had a "very friendly" meeting with his comic-creator hero, Walt Disney, in Rome in 1935, Romano told the magazine Immagini E. Fumetti. "He took him to (his official residence), Villa Torlonia and they talked about Mickey Mouse, Minnie and Donald Duck." Romano remembered his father being so taken with Snow White that he wanted to see it, again and again.

Comoros Coups leaders appoint presidents

MORONI, Comoro Islands (R) — Military coup leaders appointed two civilian presidents in the Comoro Islands Monday as resentment grew against French soldiers of fortune Bob Denard.

A French naval show of force off the Indian Ocean islands meanwhile put local troops on edge four days after a coup spearheaded by white mercenaries toppled the government of President Said Mohamed Djohar.

A committee set up by the coup leaders named two civilian joint presidents and a secretary-general before elections they had promised within two weeks to strengthen public support.

State-run Comoros Radio identified the two presidents as Mohammad Taki Abdoul Karim and Said Ali Kamal and the secretary-general as Omar Tamou. All were civilians from the main island.

Captain Combo Ayoub, the coup leader, was quoted by French television as saying he had handed power over to two civilians.

Capt. Combo and other opponents of the government were freed from prison by white mercenaries and set up a Transitional Military Committee (TMC) before elections in this Islamic republic of some 450,000 people.

"They want to give the people confidence that the army wants to hand real power back to civilians," a Moroni resident said.

But many Comorians said although they supported the ouster of President Djohar they wanted Denard, who has a Comoran wife and citizenship, to leave with his band of hired guns.

"Denard: Where of the Comoros," read a banner on two bedsheets strung up in central Badijannani Square in the capital Moroni a day after an opposition rally in support of the coup.

A French patrol boat shuttled repeatedly offshore about six kilometres from Moroni, clearly visible from the main Kandami Barracks where Denard was believed to be based.

Several French naval vessels headed for the Comoros Sunday from Djibouti and La Reunion and French forces were on alert to protect French citizens on the islands if necessary.

Soldiers who backed last Thursday's coup spearheaded by the 66-year-old French soldier of fortune and some 20 white mercenaries appeared more edgy Monday, refusing to allow foreign journalists even to approach the barracks entrance.

"There is a plan in place for the evacuation of the 1,487 French nationals if it is warranted," said French embassy Consul Alain Goulier, declining to comment about the French military moves.

He also declined to say how many members of the former government had sought asylum in the French embassy in Moroni. "The solution depends on the departure of the mercenaries and the restoration of political institutions without the president," said Sultan Chouhour, a former ambassador to Paris.

"We don't want Djohar and Denard should leave as quickly as possible," he told Reuters. "The problem of Denard's presence is its effect on international opinion with the Comoros depending on international aid for about 80 per cent of its income."



Philippine President Fidel Ramos (right) chats with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad before their official meeting in Kuala Lumpur. Mr. Ramos arrived in Malaysia for a two-day working visit (AFP photo)

Ramos seeks South East Asian unity

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — South East Asian nations must strive for greater unity if they want to establish peace, freedom and stability, Philippine President Fidel Ramos said Monday.

Mr. Ramos, who arrived Sunday for a two-day visit, was speaking at the opening of an international discourse and exhibition on Filipino freedom fighter Jose P. Rizal, organised jointly by institutes in the two countries.

Mr. Ramos said Rizal, who died in 1896, was the first regional fighter against colonialism and that those in the region now are the beneficiaries.

"Our task today is to enrich this legacy of liberty, to shape South East Asia's future according to our noblest hopes. And this we can do only if we strive for a higher unity than we have now."

"Only the unification of South East Asia will enable us to take command of our own fortunes and establish a zone of peace, freedom and stability," Mr. Ramos said.

in an address to about 300 guests from more than 10 nations.

He said that only in the past few decades was the destiny of the region in the hands of South East Asians and that the task for regional leaders is "to build new relations, design new institutions, that will ensure enduring peace and prosperity."

The Association of South East Asian Nations, comprising the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei and Vietnam, will be expanded to include Laos, Cambodia and Burma soon.

"Some of us gathered here will die without seeing the dawn of South East Asian unity. But we can now lay the groundwork for this unification," Mr. Ramos said.

Information Minister Mohammad Rahmat said Malaysia staged the conference because "the younger generation has forgotten how their elders fought to get our freedom. These meetings will remind them and get them to preserve that freedom."

Mr. Mohammad Said Rizal was chosen rather than other Asian freedom fighters like Mahatma Gandhi of India, because "Rizal was from this region and he was a Malay like us."

Rizal, born in the Philippines in 1861, went to Spain at age 21 to study and speak about freedom. He led a popular nationalist movement in the Philippines before he was executed by the Spanish authorities 99 years ago, a few years before they lost power to the United States.

The Rizal Exhibition features pictures of Rizal from the time of his youth and about 50 books by him and others. Mr. Ramos gave Malaysia a bronze bust of Rizal, which Malaysia will exhibit in one of its museums.

The Philippines broke off diplomatic ties with Malaysia in 1963 over a territorial dispute. Relations resumed a few years later but remained cool until after Mr. Ramos took office in June 1992.

North Korean leader turns down requests to assume power — report

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il has not heeded repeated calls to assume the country's top posts, showing what the North's media called "prudent and polished" state management, monitors here said Monday.

In a broadcast Sunday, Central Radio in Pyongyang said Mr. Kim had "held back" from the calls by his aides to succeed his father, Kim Il-Sung, as head of state, said Naewoe Press, an official South Korean monitoring agency.

The broadcast said the younger Kim showed his "prudent and polished management of state affairs," unprecedented in the succession of power in other countries and beyond the comprehension of ordinary people.

The broadcast, which cited an unidentified Russian commentary, came amid Pyongyang's massive preparations for the Oct. 10 anniversary celebrations of the founding of the country's ruling Workers' Party, Naewoe said.

Similar reports were carried earlier by the North's media, but the latest one was noteworthy as it came amid widespread speculation over whether the junior Kim will use the date to formally assume power next week, it said.

"As yet, there have been no definite indications Kim will formally assume power on Oct. 10," a Naewoe analyst told AFP.

Until floods devastated North Korea in July and August, many academics and Pyongyang-watchers here had speculated Kim would seize on Oct. 10 as an appropriate occasion to assume the two top posts — party general secretary and president.

But most now say they feel the younger Kim will wait until the country has recovered from the effects of the floods, leaving the country's presidency and party leadership vacant.

On Sept. 22, the South's intelligence chief said Mr. Kim, the eldest son of Kim Il-Sung who died in July of last year, was delaying his formal rise to power "neither because of ill health nor internal conflict."

In Tokyo, Kyodo News Service ran an interview with Kim Song U, chairman of North Korea's Committee for the Promotion of External Economic Cooperation, which strengthened convictions that the younger Kim would not assume the party's official helm on Oct. 10.

Kim Jong-Il would himself decide when to assume the party leadership, Mr. Kim Song U said, in the interview from Bangkok.

Mr. Kim Song U also noted that before Mr. Kim became head of state, an official event would have to be held to recommend him in the job, followed by election by the Supreme People's Assembly, North Korea's legislature.

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Portugal's Socialists see stable government after winning polls

LISBON (R) — Portugal's triumphant Socialist Party was confident Monday of forming a stable and durable government despite falling short of an absolute parliamentary majority in Sunday's vote.

"I believe the Socialist vote was sufficiently strong and clear to guarantee a government lasting the whole of the legislature's four-year life," senior party official Joaquim Pina Moura said in a radio interview.

The Socialist Party had its best ever result Sunday, winning just under 44 per cent of the vote to end a decade of rule by the centre-right Social Democrats (PSD).

Although the final count looks set to leave the Socialists a few seats short of outright control of the 230-member parliament, Portuguese President Mario Soares will ask party leader Antonio Guterres to form a government.

But the summons will take some days as there are still eight seats in parliament to be awarded — the four elected by Portugal's emigrants and four constituencies where the ballot will be re-taken after local protests prevented voting.

The fresh vote will be held on Oct. 8 while the emigrant ballots will be counted on Oct. 11. Only after that will Soares will be free to offer Guterres formally the mandate.

Political analysts expected the Socialist Party, which had never won more than 37 per cent in a national election before, to end up with 112 seats to the PSD's 88 with the hard-left Communist Party and the right-wing Popular Party having 15 each.

After the Socialists, the other big winner in Sunday's vote was the Popular Party which tripled its parliamentary presence from the five members it held in the previous legislature.

The party is committed to free market economic policies and to continuing the privatisations begun by the PSD government of outgoing Premier Anibal Cavaco Silva.

It has said that creating the conditions for Portugal to be amongst the European Union countries wedding their economies in monetary union will be its number one priority.

But it is also offering a new style after the slightly authoritarian Cavaco Silva whose government became increasingly tarnished by small but persistent cases of corruption and power abuse.

Independent Lisbon daily O Publico saluted the vote as proof that Portugal's democracy had come of age.

"Never before had the Portuguese people shown such a strong, united and mature wish for democratic alternation (of power)," it said in an editorial.



Fernando Nogueira

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Leftists win Latvia poll despite rightist gain

RIGA (R) — The left-leaning Democratic Party "Saimeiks" (Master) was declared winner of Latvian parliamentary elections Monday although a surge in support for a radical right-wing group caused a major upset.

Saimeiks took 18 seats to emerge as the biggest party in the 100-seat parliament. The ruling Latvia's Way Party dropped one seat but still came second with 17 deputies.

But the unfancied right-wing People's Movement For Latvia, also known as the Siegerist Party, gained a shock 16 seats to be the third biggest party in parliament.

The party is led by maverick German politician Joachim Siegerist — who cannot speak Latvian — whose stance has been strongly anti-Russian and anti-Communist. However, its other key policies are unclear.

Some 700,000 ethnic Russians live in Latvia. Most do not have citizenship and are not allowed to vote in the elections.

Weeks or even months of haggling are now likely as the biggest parties seek compromise to form a coalition that can command a majority in the parliament.

The results are fantastically good and I counted on that," Mr. Siegerist told Latvian Television early Monday.

Analysts said Mr. Siegerist's brand of populist politics had swung the undecided voters on election day.

His party runs an office which offers free medicine to Riga pensioners and in an earlier election he transported voters to polling stations by bus and gave out free bananas and lemonade.

"It's an example of the gaping hole that exists between the Latvian political elite and people who live in the countryside, where they feel absolutely alienated from what is happening in Riga and in government," said Paul Raudsep, managing editor of daily newspaper Diena, explaining Siegerist's success.

The result went against pre-election opinion polls which predicted that a bloc of two right-leaning parties, the Farmers Union and the LNNK, had a good chance of gaining enough seats between them to form the core of a coalition government.

But both did badly in the weekend voting. The LNNK won eight seats and the Farmers Union seven. The radical nationalist grouping For Fatherland and Freedom, which wants to introduce even tougher legislation on citizenship, was placed fourth with 14 seats.

Mr. Raudsep said some parties which won seats, such as the Socialist Party and the left-wing Latvian Unity Party, had benefited from protest votes.

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Danish police arrest jailbreak mastermind

COPENHAGEN (R) — Danish police arrested the mastermind behind the prison break of a notorious inmate on Monday.

The inmate, who was serving a life sentence for a 1976 murder, escaped from the prison with 14 other inmates.

The escape was the first in 100 years for the prison, which is considered one of the most secure in the world.

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Simpson jury faces difficult decision

LOS ANGELES (R) — After nine months of testimony, the jury in the O.J. Simpson trial began deliberations Monday to decide if the former football great is guilty of murdering his ex-wife and her friend.

With the eyes of the world watching them, the mostly black jury of 10 men and two women face a difficult task: Do they agree with prosecutors and convict O.J. Simpson of murdering Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman? Or do they agree with Simpson's defence team, which characterised the legendary sports hero as a victim of a police conspiracy, and vote to acquit him?

When the jury of nine blacks, two whites and one Hispanic begin their deliberations, they will have more than 40,000 pages of evidence and 1,000 exhibits to help them.

The jury, which has been sequestered in a hotel since Jan. 11, told Judge Lance Ito they would deliberate six days a week, Monday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. pdt (1600 to 2400 GMT), with one hour for lunch.

Most observers expect the jury to take at least 10 days to two weeks to reach a verdict.

Among the choices are acquittal, conviction on either first-degree or second-degree murder, or a split verdict.

If Simpson is acquitted, he cannot be tried again for the crime under double jeopardy rules. However, if he is found guilty of first-degree murder he will spend the rest of his life behind bars.

Even though California has the death penalty, the maximum punishment Simpson can receive is life in prison because prosecutors waived their right last year to seek the death penalty in this case.

If the jury finds Simpson guilty of two counts of second-degree murder, Ito can sentence Simpson to at least 15 years in prison.

A hung jury, which some observers maintain is possible, would mean Simpson could be tried again for the murders.

Simpson, who has steadfastly denied he had anything to do with the murders, did not testify in the case.

Famed attorney Alan Dershowitz, who is a member of the defence team, defended the decision Sunday, saying it would have diverted attention from flaws in the prosecution's case.

"We were all very satisfied he would have been a superb witness and he would have testified without the need for much preparation," Mr. Dershowitz said on CNN.

Natal province stronghold. IFF leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who serves as home affairs minister in Mr. Mandela's unity cabinet, told a weekend rally in KwaZulu-Natal that the restoration of the Zulu kingdom "can no longer wait."

Mr. Buthelezi's hardline stance has put him in direct conflict with Mr. Mandela's ruling African National Congress (ANC), which rejects the outright federalism demanded by the IFF in favour of a more powerful central government.

Mr. Buthelezi told the rally that autonomy was the only way to guarantee "peace, welfare and prosperity (for) all our people" in KwaZulu-Natal, which continues to be plagued by bloody conflict between IFF and ANC supporters.

The IFF leader is also reported to have taken steps to calling a snap election in KwaZulu-Natal, a move political analysts interpret as a gambit to increase his party's slender majority in the provincial legislature and push through his self-rule plans.

The IFF is not the ANC's only headache. Mr. De Klerk's formerly-ruling National Party is increasingly abandoning the spirit of cooperation that characterised the unity government in the months immediately after last year's historic all-race election.

Mr. De Klerk's once cordial relationship with Mr. Mandela has also been steadily deteriorating, culminating in the joint 1993 Nobel Peace laureates having an angry spat on a Johannesburg sidewalk late Friday.

The NP has been battling internal divisions over its dual role as the junior partner in government to Mr. Mandela's ANC and as the country's largest opposition party.

Jordan Times

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Trial going awry

THE TRIAL of 49 members of the Muslim Brotherhood by a military court in Cairo has naturally attracted the attention of the world community since what is at issue there pertains to everything dear to the forces of democracy across the globe. Two immediate concerns come to mind when considering the decision by the Egyptian government to try the Islamists before a military tribunal.

The first is whether the Brotherhood can still be viewed as an illegal organisation or party in a system of government that is on record as promoting pluralistic democracy. Indeed Egypt, like all states that ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), is treaty-obligated to accord all shades of opinion, ideology or faith the right to express themselves peacefully, promote their ideals and enter open competition of ideas among themselves. This is after all the essence of democracy which nations have accepted as the norm for governing. The failure or success of the Islamists, or any other faction for that matter, must be solved freely by the people when they are offered the periodic opportunities to cast their ballots. No leadership can ever contend that it knows better than its own people what is best for them.

The second concern is that the rationale behind shifting the trial of the Islamists to a military court cannot withstand the challenges posed by the contemporary standards for fair trial as espoused repeatedly by international human rights instruments. The mere expression of preference for military trials is a vote of no confidence in the judicial system of government.

Surely, Cairo does not wish and should not wish to tell the world that it has no faith or trust in its own civil court system. Neither the ICCPR nor any other human rights treaty or convention to which Egypt is a party would tolerate military trials of civilians who are allegedly members of an outlawed party, especially when the accused are in no way connected with violent or terrorist acts. Even then, there is nothing that should prevent a national court from looking into their case since their very membership in the Muslim Brotherhood is a contentious issue, and the legality of this group is questioned, only on the basis of dubious legislation that can be regarded as unlawful, either through being contrary to the constitution of the land, or the stipulations of the ICCPR and other relevant international treaties that have the force of law in Egypt as elsewhere.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily Monday condemned the continued expulsion of Palestinians from Libya. Saying that there is no justification for the deportation of Palestinians, the paper rejected Tripoli's claim that the Palestinians are leaving by their own free will. The Libyan leaders realise that the Palestinians yearn to go back home, and that they are living temporarily in Arab and non-Arab countries until the time comes for them to be repatriated, continued the paper. The Libyans also realise that the Palestinians do not accept a substitute for Palestine as a homeland; and are waiting for the appropriate and convenient circumstances to make the trip back home. It added. The mass expulsion of Palestinians lends real credibility to the views of the Palestinian leadership, which has been negotiating with Israel to recover Palestinian land, and which has accepted what has been offered to it although the Israeli offer does not fulfil the Palestinian people's aspirations, said the daily. The Palestinian leadership is keen on reestablishing a homeland for the Palestinian people, so that they go home when they are no longer wanted in the host Arab states.

A WRITER in Al Dustour said Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres's proposal for a confederation between Jordan and Palestine is aimed at serving Israel's own demographic, political and security interests. Israel does not want a Palestinian state to emerge on its borders; and by suggesting the confederation idea it is trying to find a solution to its own predicament and save the Jewish state the trouble of accepting or coexisting with a Palestinian state, said Taher Al Adwan. The writer said that Palestinians, like all other people, have the right to determine their own fate and create their own independent and sovereign state. The question of unity or confederation between Palestine and Jordan concerns the Jordanians and Palestinians alone, continued the writer. Israel has to comply with the requirements of peace and refrain from talking about this confederation which it had destroyed by its 1967 occupation of the West Bank, said the writer. He said by suggesting a confederation at this stage, Israel is trying to avoid meeting its commitments of returning to the Palestinians their full rights in their homeland, and most particularly avoid discussing the question of Jerusalem, which the Palestinians seek to establish as their own capital.

The View from Fourth Circle

Snake oil salesmen, false prophets, the business of faith

By Rami G. Khouri

OURS IS a very ancient, deeply spiritual and very mercantile land, and therefore an appropriate venue for business, gods, and the interaction of these two very serious, very weighty phenomena. Gods and the spirituality sector are very dear to us here in the Middle East. We often invoke the name of God in our everyday speech and greetings. No secularism here. This is spirituality country.

Until now, and for about the last, oh, five thousand or so years, Middle Eastern spirituality has tended to focus on human moral values and behavioural codes, always dictated by gods, and brought to us by holy messengers. In ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian times, there was little difference between gods, prophets and messengers. With the advent of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, we started to differentiate between the monotheistic God himself and His messengers and prophets on earth, who in turn were usually seen as distinct from kings, caesars and other temporal political rulers.

The Middle East has been a world leader in the spirituality business, exporting religions, gods and prophets to the rest of the world. Nearly half the world's population are Christians, Muslims or Jews, worshippers of the god that was first formally identified and deified in this region.

Now, however, the days when we set the tone for the world's faith industry are slowly coming to an end. For we here in the principal vortex of global spirituality are very quickly succumbing to a new god that coexists happily with our existing gods, faiths and moral memories: the god of the market.

At several recent conferences and workshops in Amman that included participants from the United States, Europe and Israel, I have been struck by the extraordinarily uniform and widespread emphasis that has been placed on two parallel phenomena: Free market economic reforms at home, and attracting foreign capital from abroad.

These are no longer mere economic principles or policy options; they have been elevated to the rank of faith, and, like faith, they are spreading around the world at a brisk pace. Sometimes they attract new believers on the strength of their own compelling logic; often, they are spread by missionaries of the free market faith; and in some cases, they are imposed in the manner that political and economic systems were imposed in the colonial days of old.

I am suspicious of this new faith because of several related points: a) it is offered as a solution to all of our domestic and regional ills, b) it is offered by virtually everyone coming at us from the West in general, but more specifically from the United States, and c) it comes with a series of tried and tested moral/market formulae for behaviour that is guaranteed to bring us to paradise, or the

promised land, or at least a nice house in a quiet residential district of our city — wherever on earth our city may be. I am reminded of the snake oil salesmen in the American West in the late 19th century, who sold a single remedy for all the ailments that an ordinary person could ever suffer — and who disappeared out of town as soon as they sold a few dozen bottles of the miracle cure.

I would like to suggest a word of caution here, before we in Jordan or others in the Middle East embrace this new god of the market without sufficiently assessing its full costs and implications. I am not saying that we should reject it; I am saying that we should be far more selective in adopting the strengths of free market economics, while retaining the strengths of economic systems in which the private and public sectors coordinate their policies within a wider framework of national identity that is much less secular and slightly less mercantile than the systems of the industrialised West.

The rush to embrace free market systems in Jordan and other Middle Eastern states takes place at a moment when most of our economies suffer high unemployment and politically volatile poverty levels. Privatisation and market economics will aggravate both of these trends in the short run, at a moment when governments are fiscally and managerially incapable of reducing the negative impacts of free marketisation on families and individuals.

The moral and political triumph of the free market as the new god that defines the moral behaviour of individuals and states in the Middle East is likely to be troubling and disconcerting for tens of millions of people. Many will suffer such despair that they will translate their sentiments into disruptive political action. In South and Central America and Eastern Europe, we have ample models of countries that adopted free market systems at a very high cost to their people. There are no surprises in this new religion. We know how many people will lose their jobs, and how many others will never find jobs. The rules of the creed are written in many books, and etched into the modern history of many other lands.

The question for us in Jordan is: How do we deal with this enigmatic situation? We know that we have to reform and we know that free market economics brings many real benefits. Western Europe and Eastern Asia offer good examples of how market economics, coupled with strong social benefits systems, generated rising prosperity for all while minimising the number of people who fell through the cracks and suffered chronic poverty and despair. Can we reform our economies in such a way that we prompt real growth in a sustainable manner, while protecting the

interests of the weak and marginalised?

The evidence to date during the past decade is not very impressive in the Middle East, where the growing poor class has been politically written off, and where its expressions of frustration and despair have been dealt with through three parallel mechanisms: outright disdain for their needs, violent political pacification, or the rise of gangsterism.

Our particular dilemma is heavily rooted in timing: The snake oil merchants and the free market faith preachers proselytise amongst us at a moment when we are trying to build on the full promise of the Arab-Israeli peace process. If the market is the new faith, the promise of peace is the new prophet on whose back the faith will be spread to the multitudes.

These are facts that we cannot dismiss or wish away. We have to deal with the market religion and its power in a manner that allows us to tap its genuine benefits without having to swallow all of its empty promises as well.

The reason that snake oil salesmen lasted so long is that they made a lot of money. This was a very profitable business for the merchants who did not have to live in the communities where they did business. They kept travelling from town to town at a pace that never allowed their disappointed old clients to expose them to unsuspecting new buyers.

The market religion is a different matter altogether. We know its strengths and weaknesses, its real promises and its empty rhetoric. Most important of all, we know what we have to do to minimise the impact of widespread market reforms on the poor and vulnerable, so that market economics brings hope and better living standards to the vast majority of our people.

It is important that we recognise the snake oil salesmen amongst us today who will try to sell us a magic cure for all of our ailments, without necessarily taking that same cure themselves for their similar ailments. The market is not a god, and we should not be so naive to believe that it can solve all of our problems.

As I said at the start, ours is a very ancient, deeply spiritual and very mercantile land. Prophets come and go, and even gods themselves rise and fall. But people endure — unless they get drunk on the snake oil, and, like false prophets, die alone from the ignominy of their own deception, shallowness and desperation. It would be very ironic if we, who sorted out many of history's true faiths from the fakes, would now roll over in moral confusion and material greed at the sight of yet another ambitious salesman in the fancy dress of a worldly saviour.



Japan's LDP gives itself a leader with credentials

By Douglas H. Paal

WASHINGTON — With the election of Ryutaro Hashimoto as president of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), America will be tempted either to congratulate themselves or to be moan the fact that the controversial tactics of Mickey Kantor, the U.S. trade representative, helped move Mr. Hashimoto to the top of Japan's political ladder.

It is true that by calling Mr. Kantor's trade bluff earlier this year, Mr. Hashimoto, as trade minister, gained for himself a wealth of approving publicity in Japan. By starting down U.S. demands and agreeing only to extend trade trends decided during the Bush administration, albeit at diminished levels, he satisfied growing Japanese nationalist sentiment. In this narrow sense, it is therefore true that the Clinton team helped to put its most capable trade adversary into higher office.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude that American mismanagement is at the heart of Mr. Hashimoto's rise. In fact, he has come to embody in his personal style some of the powerful reformist impulses in Japan, impulses that have been frustrated with the failure of a succession of governments since 1993.

First, Mr. Hashimoto demonstrates unusually strong leadership traits, in marked contrast with most of his contemporaries. He is well-informed about the intricacies of policy, and decisive in a way that can sometimes

appear abrupt in Japan. Senior Japanese bureaucrats speak of his active style in the briefing sessions that form the nexus between Japanese political and bureaucratic power. The last leader with this level of executive skill was Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, another standard.

Second, although he is a member of the traditionalist Takeshita faction of the LDP, Mr. Hashimoto has a personally clean reputation. According to one senior bureaucrat who knows him well, he has cultivated his "lone wolf" image precisely to set himself apart from the typical go-along-to-get-along LDP members.

The desire for clean politics runs deep in contemporary Japan, and Mr. Hashimoto has a chance to capture the reformist banner back from the newly created opposition parties. If he succeeds, the odds are long, the irony of reform coming from within the LDP will be intense.

Third, despite Mr. Hashimoto's exploitation of anti-U.S. sentiment, he rises from the mainstream of LDP foreign policy, which continues to regard Japan's relationship with America as its core. Maintenance of good, productive relations with Washington will be one of his top priorities, according to well-informed officials around him in Tokyo. His previous focus on economic issues will be expanded to embrace security issues as well in a display of his capacity for flexibility and personal growth.

But Mr. Hashimoto will insist on more balanced, mutually respectful and interest-based relations. For him, as for most Japanese, misty-eyed emotional ties to America belong to the past. A rational calculation of Japan's interests will re-inforce continued strong ties, but trade and other frictions will force a gradual estrangement onto that calculation.

Does Mr. Hashimoto have liabilities? One seasoned observer in Tokyo said that he tends to be "too explicit" in his politics. Japan's traditional culture values consensus reached through indirect, nearly invisible political manoeuvre, where real intentions often remain implicit. It is not yet clear that Tokyo's political circles are ready for Mr. Hashimoto's direct approach, despite the public sentiment behind him.

The LDP is part of the coalition government led by Socialist Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama. Mr. Hashimoto's rise to the presidency of the LDP will not automatically make him prime minister. He is likely to remain trade minister or become foreign minister and deputy prime minister in the months ahead.

If he remains trade minister, it would embolden bureaucrats in his ministry and frighten those in the Foreign Ministry who see themselves saddled with weak leadership under their present minister, Yohei Kono, whom Mr. Hashimoto defeated in the LDP picketing. More likely, Mr.

Hashimoto will become foreign minister in a cabinet reshuffle later in the autumn.

When President Bill Clinton and other heads of government arrive in Osaka in November for the leaders' meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, they will probably be dealing with Mr. Murayama as a lame duck prime minister. Mr. Hashimoto will be there, but will have a convenient excuse to deflect pressures from his visitors. This will reinforce the very strong sentiment in Tokyo to take "no new initiatives" for America.

By aiming barbs at Japan's bureaucrats, the Clinton administration has turned them into well-motivated adversaries who will be reluctant to do anything to help get the U.S. president re-elected.

Once Japan completes its sacrosanct annual budget process in December-January, the political climate will shift and pressures are expected to grow for a general election under the new reformed procedures. If, as seems likely, the LDP obtains a plurality or majority, Mr. Hashimoto will be well-placed to become prime minister.

The writer, who served at the National Security Council under Ronald Reagan and George Bush, is president of the Asia Pacific Policy Centre, a research institute in Washington. He contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.

Oman trade link with Israel a psychological move

By Ashraf Fouad
Reuters

DUBAI — Oman's surprise decision to forge trade ties with Israel effectively bypasses an Arab League resolution for the economic boycott of the Jewish state. But analysts said on Monday the move was largely psychological.

"This is more of a psychological move than one that would lead to immediate diplomatic ties and other practical steps," said a well-placed Arab analyst in Oman.

"It is no longer a novelty," another analyst said. "Everyone is meeting with them (Israeli officials) and the Gulf states are attending the multilateral (Middle East) peace talks."

The foreign ministers of Oman and Israel agreed at a meeting in New York on Saturday night to exchange trade representative offices as part of efforts to boost economic cooperation.

Arab analysts said Oman was not expected to depart from a general Gulf Arab policy not to fully normalise ties with Israel until a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement which includes Syria and Lebanon was reached.

"Yes, it is a step towards eventual full ties, but do not expect that very soon. We all have to wait to see the next steps" towards an Israeli accord with both Syria and Lebanon, said the Oman-based analyst.

Oman is the only member of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to forge official trade ties with Israel. Following talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren

Christopher in New York last year, GCC states agreed to lift the secondary economic boycott of firms dealing with Israel.

"GCC states made it clear last year they were ready to back lifting the primary boycott of Israel if a (Arab) League member directly involved in the peace process made such a proposal to the league," said another analyst.

"Oman did not go against the GCC by doing so," he added.

The Riyadh-based alliance, which is due to hold its next annual summit in Oman in December, also includes Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain.

Analysts said that while some Gulf states might decide to do follow Oman's example, they did not expect these to include Saudi Arabia, the GCC's dominant partner and largest economy.

"The biggest country on the block can't play this game," one analyst said.

Even in Muscat's case, analysts said, Israeli products were not expected to be available soon on the Omani market.

"It is not completely discounted but it will take time. It will also be difficult in the beginning for Omani consumers to go out and buy a 'made in Israel' product," one said.

Israel's Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Sunday night that the agreement with Oman was meant to "encourage cooperation... in economic and technical fields."

It said the two sides were discussing joint water, agricultural, medical and telecommunications projects.

LETTERS

Strict response warranted

To the Editor:

MR. SALAMEH Ne'emati's allegations that some officials, journalists or even members of Parliament are on the payroll of a foreign embassy requires an uncompromising, strict response from our national newspapers, which were renowned for their neutrality and objectivity.

Mr. Ne'emati must receive his information straight from the source. After all, professional journalism requires education, veracity and culture.

Said D. Khalifeh,
Amman

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

ni G. Khouri

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Blood pact that must end in gore

Europe's current timetable for a single currency
will lead to political disaster, predicts David Marsh



Timetable for a single currency will lead to political disaster

Helmut Kohl and Jacques Chirac appear to be heading for doom

for the upset. Part of the culpability does indeed attach to France and those other would-be EMU members who are still a long way from fulfilling the economic criteria (particularly on government deficits and debt) that were agreed in 1991 as determining the suitability of individual economies to join a single currency. The prime responsibility, however, for the EMU plan almost certainly having to be shelved lies with Germany, the country which (along with France) drove the Maastricht process to show that the new reunified Germany was just as reliable and committed to European integration as the old Western-oriented Federal Republic.

From Mr. Kohl downwards, the Bonn establishment has always supported EMU, essentially for reasons of foreign policy. Yet ever since the plan was hatched at the end of the Eighties, the German electorate has consistently shown that it does not want to give up the mark. Many ordinary Germans instinctively feel that a new European currency would be less secure than the one that has guided them for nearly half a century. The mark has become a badge and instrument of post-war stability and prosperity. The reticence of the public is shared by much of German industry, particularly small and medium-sized firms, although the big banks have supported the EMU idea so far.

Waigel's blunt remarks were simply the latest sign of Bonn's cooling towards EMU in the past few years. Mr. Kohl in Majorca did his

implacable best to calm jangled European nerves, but German politicians have now fully grasped the mood of the burgher in the street. In a country as democratic as Germany has now become, no measure as significant and sweeping as the replacement of the cur-

rency can be undertaken without the support of the people. To improve the EMU's public image, the government has attempted to introduce additional conditions governing German

participation, going beyond the criteria written into the Maastricht treaty. Yet with each new requirement — first that monetary union should be accompanied by an (as yet undefined) form of political union, then that the European central bank should be in Frankfurt,

then that the new currency should not be called the ecu, and now (as Waigel suggested last week) that the EMU debt criteria should be further toughened — with each of these the impression has grown that Germany is seeking to escape its treaty

obligations. Ironically, while each new attempt to tighten the EMU screw has unsettled Germany's partners, it has done little to assuage the fears of the 75 per cent of the German electorate who, according to public opinion polls, oppose the single currency. The belief persists that the mark's fate will be a big and emotional issue in 1998 elections.

How did we get into this mess? It is essential to realise that, for many informed Germans, the writing has long been on the wall. Mr. Kohl received no shortage of advice that the Maastricht timetable was flawed in setting out a supposedly automatic process for the establishment of EMU at the latest on Jan. 1, 1999. Karl Otto Pöhl, then Bundesbank president, forecast as long ago as 1989 that the German population would show "considerable resistance" once they realised that EMU meant control of their money would pass abroad.

At the Maastricht summit in December 1991, Mr. Kohl's officials showed great unease at the "automaticity" of the EMU timetable railroaded through by then President Francois Mitterrand and Giulio Andreotti, the then Italian prime minister. One senior member of Mr. Kohl's entourage told me privately at Maastricht that the plan was a "time bomb"; four years later, his warning has been vindicated. In having pushed through a treaty that many senior Germans believed along would be difficult or impossible to put into effect, the German government has laid itself open to charges of duplicity, or

worse, by its partners. This is precisely the effect Mr. Kohl was most eager to avoid.

What happens next? The trouble with EMU is that it is both politically explosive and beset by pitfalls of great technical complexity, where each apparent solution grows into a Hydra's head of fresh problems. Bending the EMU rules to allow innocuous little Belgium to join, for instance, is difficult to manage because Italy (which the Bundesbank most firmly wants to keep out) could then claim it was being unfairly treated. Similarly, insisting that EMU can take place only with a small "core" group (of Germany and the Benelux countries, and possibly France) is convincing only up to a point. Such an outcome would not remove the threat of competitive devaluations, particularly worrisome to German industry, by countries such as the U.K., Italy, Spain and Sweden.

The storm clouds over the Maastricht plan will almost inevitably force a postponement of EMU. Yet the subject will remain on European politicians' agendas, not least because the resulting economic turbulence will, if anything, increase the mirage-like appeal of the goal of currency stability. One lesson of the Maastricht saga, however, must be learnt: A plan that appears noble and persuasive from a foreign policy point of view, yet which is perceived domestically as countering a country's fundamental interests, is likely not to succeed but to scatter the seeds of mistrust and misfortune.

It may even end with the gory head of one of the protagonists being brandished, as was Macbeth's in the final scene of the play.

The author is director of European strategy for Robert Fleming, the London-based investment bank. The above article is reprinted from the Independent.

Bosnia truce talks 'inconclusive'

(Continued from page 1)

new and more disturbing phase. We are now receiving reports of robbery, often by men in uniforms, as opposed to the looting of abandoned houses," said U.N. spokesman Chris Gunness.

"United Nations civilian police have reported at least ten cases of this in the past week," he added.

Despite Croatian claims that it had arrested hundreds of people in connection with looting, Mr. Gunness said that the attacks continued into last week, more than six weeks since the offensive to retake the previously Serb-held Krajina region ended.

"Until we see these activi-

ties halted, we will continue to believe that either there is a problem with command and control — and although the command has been given out it's not reaching the ground forces — or that at some level, most likely a very low level, (there is) at least some kind of complicity in these acts," he told reporters.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman admitted last month that Croatian forces had engaged in some "reprisals" against Serbs, and condemned these acts, but said they were understandable.

Mr. Gunness estimated that between 3,755 and 4,155 people remained in Croatia's devastated Krajina region

from a population of about 185,000 before the Croatian army retook control in August. In some areas, 90 per cent of the homes were burned following the Croatian army's taking of the Krajina, which Serbs seized from Croats in 1991.

Those who remained generally did so because they were too poor or too old to make the arduous trip made by others to Serbia, and these most vulnerable were being systematically victimised.

"Whereas previously there was looting of abandoned, empty houses, now that people are back in their houses, or some people are back in, there are more and more cases of people being robbed at gunpoint," said Mr. Gunness.

a reply from the authorities," he said.

In Amman, Mr. Zanoun said: "We remind Colonel Qadhafi that it is the Palestinians who built his country. This action is stupid," Mr. Zanoun said, referring to the expulsions.

He said he planned to talk "urgently" with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and the Arab League to stop the expulsions and ask the PLO to address the United Nations Security Council.

Mr. Zanoun accused the Arab League of dealing "carelessly" with the issue of the expelled Palestinians and said the PNC would seek international support to pressure Libya to reverse the expulsions decision.

"We'll bring up the issue during the world parliamentarians conference this month," he said.

PLO demands prisoner release

(Continued from page 1)

ment will see what it can do about it."

According to an Israeli version of the accord initiated in Taba, Egypt, last week, "all female detainees and prisoners shall be released" on the signing of the agreement.

The 10 Israeli prisoners — among them Ami Popper who was jailed for shooting dead seven Palestinians in Israel in 1990 — took their case to Israel's high court of justice demanding an equal chance to be pardoned.

Like the high court, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was against freeing them. The Israeli leader said on Sunday: "I think that whoever murders Palestinians out of a longing for revenge does not deserve a thing."

Israel has agreed to free about 2,000 of the 6,000 Palestinians it holds as part of the accord expanding 16-month-old Palestinian rule beyond Gaza and Jericho to more of the West Bank.

"We will not try to force decisions onto the president," Mr. Rabin said after talks with Mr. Weizman on his return from Washington. "I presume he will bear in mind political and other factors, but ultimately the decision is his."

The issue cleared one hurdle Monday when supreme court rejected an appeal to block the release of Palestinian prisoners.

Mr. Weizman, who is also under pressure from the right-wing has said he will give his verdict on the releases after parliament meets on Thursday to vote on the autonomy accord.

A narrow majority in par-

Exercises continue in Kuwait

(Continued from page 1)

traffic into Hebron and other West Bank areas.

The two sides negotiated special arrangements for Hebron because some 400 Jewish settlers live in the heart of the city among 120,000 Palestinians. The town has often been a flash-point for Arab-Jewish violence.

Israel's cabinet was meanwhile told of fresh warnings that militants opposed to the autonomy accord to stage suicide attacks during the Jewish holidays.

Mr. Rabin adviser urged Israelis to be on the lookout for bombs, especially while riding on buses, shopping in outdoor markets and praying in synagogues.

"There is certainly information of a possible attack," Mr. Sarid said after Monday's cabinet meeting. "Security forces are doing what they need to do, but every citizen needs to open our eyes and notice anything suspicious."

Soldiers manning roadblocks and bases in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were told to be on high alert, the radio said. The army refused comment on the report.

On Sunday, Israel extended a closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip through Friday, barring tens of thousands of Palestinian labourers from their jobs in Israel. The travel ban affects two million Palestinians.

Gaza has been sealed since Sept. 20 when security officials said they received warnings that the militant group Islamic Jihad planned an attack in Israel.

A closure was imposed on the West Bank last Wednesday.

Quake kills at least 57 in Turkey

(Continued from page 1)

as Swiss rescue workers with sniffer dogs searched collapsed buildings for possible survivors.

"It was a sudden, very violent tremor," said housewife Dondu Ucmak, 34. She was taking shelter in a tent, too frightened to return to her damaged home. "Everything in the house fell over and broke," she said.

Single-storey shanty houses in the outskirts of the town were relatively undamaged.

An earthquake killed 330 people in Dinar in 1925. Turkey's biggest quake in recent years, in the eastern town of Erzincan in 1992, killed more than 500 people.

President Suleyman Demirel visited the town, situated on a high plain in an agricultural region known in Turkey as the Lake district. "Dinar has been badly hit. We don't know the exact damage," he was quoted by Anatolian as saying. "It will become clearer by evening, he said.

Prime Minister Tansu Ciller also visited Dinar, further delaying her 12-day efforts to form a new government after her resignation last month.

Children asked to vote for Saddam

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi children are to be asked to back Saddam Hussein as president in a special referendum to be carried out in schools next week, newspapers reported here Monday.

Iraq's five million schoolchildren are being given the chance to vote on Oct. 11 because they are too young to take part in an unprecedented referendum to reelect Saddam Hussein as president four days later, the Iraqi Students Federation said. In a message to President Saddam, quoted by the press, the government-run federation said it wanted to allow pupils "to express their fidelity and loyalty to the leader for his paternal encouragement."

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U.S. airports on security alert

(Continued from page 12)

many delays really. What people might notice is an increase in surveillance by airport police," said Tara Hamilton, spokeswoman for the two airports. "We'll have increased announcements... reminding people to keep an eye on their luggage. This is all in place, but it will be stepped up."

Passengers should carry government-issued identification such as a driver's license or passport and expect bags to be checked more often than before, a spokeswoman for Chicago's Midway and O'Hare international airports said.

"These measures are not as stringent as what we saw with the ... Gulf war, which

allowed ticketed passengers, only and had no skycap check-up," said Lisa Howard, spokeswoman for Chicago's aviation department.

Transportation Secretary Pena asked Federal Aviation Administrator (FAA) David Hinson to direct airport authorities and air carriers to upgrade security as outlined in an FAA directive issued in early August.

"The decision to increase security is based upon an assessment provided by federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies, combined with an analysis of the current state of affairs," Mr. Pena said in a statement.

The bombing led to widespread heightening of security around federal facilities.

Syrian, Egyptian

(Continued from page 12)

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres urged Syria and Lebanon Monday to quit their footdragging and make peace in the Middle East a reality.

Mr. Peres told the U.N. General Assembly that the two countries had "to stop hesitating, to stop wondering. They have to... come in and follow up."

He singled out President Assad, who, he said, was "making security the major agenda" and for limiting talks to military issues.

"Experience has shown that through a negotiation on all levels, embracing all issues, without timidity, without fatigue, we can achieve peace," Mr. Peres said.

Sudan: No early thaw in U.S. ties

(Continued from page 12)

Baghdad in the 1990-91 Gulf crisis.

Gen. Bashir said he had not supported Iraq in the war, but had only objected to the massive build-up of Western-led forces in the region that preceded the 1991 conflict.

Qatar and Sudan have agreed to launch a joint oil company to pump 5,000 barrels a day from fields 600 kilometres south of Khartoum on the White Nile, east of the southern township of Melut.

The first phase of the venture is expected to cost about \$12 million. Later plans call for an additional \$30 million.

N-test ignites condemnation

(Continued from page 12)

around the world would have stopped the tests.

"We are very, very disappointed, but we will not take any further steps. We will have to explain by words," she said before starting a scheduled meeting with her EU counterparts in Luxembourg.

Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg-Petersen, who led the chorus of EU disapproval of the first test, was detected. "I have already expressed my deep disappointment," he said.

Luxembourg and the Netherlands also condemned the blast.

Children asked to vote for Saddam

(Continued from page 12)

onto the roof of the French ambassador's residence in London to protest over the test.

"It is for the French to justify these nuclear tests, but what we must do is keep our eye on the main strategic objective which is the comprehensive test ban treaty which will permanently ban all nuclear tests," British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said.

In a television interview, New Zealand's Bolger turned up the heat on Britain, which faces diplomatic isolation at a Commonwealth heads of government meeting summit in New Zealand in November.

Britain's refusal to condemn France is expected to be a key subject of discussion at the meeting.

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Baghdad prepares opinion for return to oil market

LIMASSOL, Cyprus (Agencies) — Iraq sought to reassure oil producers Monday that its return to the world oil market after the end of U.N. sanctions would not push down prices or harm their interests.

Iraq's oil production, which stands at 0.7 million barrels of oil per day (bpd), mostly for domestic consumption, could climb to two million bpd after the end of sanctions and rise again to six million bpd within several years, said Saadallah Fathi, Iraqi oil ministry advisor.

But this return "will not have the negative impact on prices some people often cite or speculate about," Mr. Fathi told a conference on Middle East energy strategy held in Limassol, Cyprus.

"Our intention is to strengthen and stabilise the oil market for the benefit of all its participants," he said.

Iraq's extra output is in line with expected expansion of the oil market anyway, he added. The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is forecast to increase its output from 28 million bpd in 1995 to up to 41 million bpd in 2005.

Iraq has been under a U.N. oil and trade embargo since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Its pre-1990 production level was 3.2 million bpd.

"Iraq is one of the most under-explored and under-developed oil provinces in the world," the oil ministry advisor said. Total production in Iraq between 1927 and 1990 stood at 21 billion barrels or 3.3 per cent of world output, which is "disproportionate to its proven reserves."

Limited oil sales

Senior Iraqi government officials are pressing for the resumption of limited crude oil sales to ease the humanitarian situation in the country, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said on Monday.

It said the measure could be introduced after an Iraqi cabinet change and that the United States has said it would not oppose implementation of U.N. Resolution 986, which allows Iraq to sell oil worth \$2 billion over six months to meet humanitarian needs.

"Reports reaching MEES from Baghdad indicate that several senior officials in the Iraqi government are now advocating the acceptance of Resolution 986," the Nicosia-based newsletter said.

"These officials argue that, under the present circumstances of Iraq's complete ostracism by the international community, there is no prospect that the oil sanctions would even be seriously reviewed before the U.S. presidential elections in November 1996."

"The officials also point out that the deteriorating political situation and the dire economic conditions in the country are such that it would be very difficult to maintain law and order without some kind of alleviation such as would be provided by the limited oil sales expedient," MEES said.

MEES said the president of the Security Council asked Iraq's U.N. envoy Nizar Hamdoun last month to urge Baghdad to resume the oil sales after the United States said it would not try to stop them.

Under Resolution 986, Iraq would be allowed to export 51 billion worth of oil every three months which, according to the authoritative MEES, translate into an export volume of 700,000 barrels per day. That would be over and above Iraq's present output of 550,000 bpd.

More than five years after the U.N. sanctions were imposed, Iraq's humanitarian needs are immense. It needs \$2.8 billion in food aid to avert widespread hunger, according to officials from the U.N. World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Four million people are destitute and nearly 70 per cent of the country's 20 million people lacks the income to buy sufficient food, the officials said.

Iraq's proven reserves at the start of 1993 were 112 billion barrels, or 112 years' worth at its 1989 production rate of a billion barrels a year, Mr. Fathi told the Limassol meeting.

Moreover, Iraq's possible reserves stand at 214 billion barrels, he added.

Another point in its favour is that 40 per cent of its reserves are in six oil fields already under development, and another 40 per cent in 10 other fields pinpointed by the oil industry but not yet exploited, he said.

That makes exploitation easier, especially since the oil fields are huge by world standards, he said.

However, Iraq's 1980-1988 war with Iran and the 1991 Gulf war had hit its resources hard and Baghdad needs \$25 billion to finance its plans, Mr. Fathi said.

"We will continue the development of our producing oil fields by ourselves," he said, suggesting, however, that it may be possible to "negotiate with interested parties either on the basis of service or production-sharing contracts."

"There are even areas in Iraq where we are prepared to go into risk-type arrangements. This could be applicable to areas where we have done very little or no exploitation work such as the western desert," he said.

But Iraq must first secure a lifting of the U.N. embargo.

Mr. Fathi would not speculate on a date, but said: "The pressure and excuses of one or two countries to extend the embargo unnecessarily are counter-productive and do not contribute to the normalisation of the situation or the stability in an important region such as ours."

Bailout fund a challenge for the White House

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Clinton administration is facing the tough job of coming up with \$38 billion for a new emergency bailout fund to deal with future Mexico-style financial crises.

That issue was expected to be a primary topic this week as the 179-nation International Monetary Fund (IMF) and its sister lending organisation, the World Bank, hold their annual meetings. The gatherings get under way with preliminary events on Wednesday.

The administration hopes to win a formal endorsement from the IMF's policy-setting interim committee for creation of a new "emergency financing mechanism" to help nations facing sudden financial calamity.

The new fund would have access to \$56 billion. Half of that money would come from an existing \$28 billion line of credit established at the IMF by the United States and 11 other wealthy nations. The other half would have to be raised from new contributions.

Not only would the current 12 donors — including the United States, Japan, Germany, France, Britain and Saudi Arabia — be asked to put up more money, but the original group hopes to tap newly wealthy Asian nations such as South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia and Singapore.

But so far no country has come forward with any specific pledge. There have been a number of objections, ranging from what status the new donors would have to worries that the mere establishment of such a fund will encourage risky behaviour.

"What will stop a country from pursuing reckless policies, from going deeper into debt, knowing if they fail, the newly created fund stands ready with a bailout," asked Sen. Lauch Faircloth, a Republican from North Carolina who has already introduced legislation to keep the United States from participating in any new bailout fund.

The administration, however, argues that getting more countries involved is precisely what is needed to make sure that the United States, as the world's largest economy, is not left to deal with a future crisis by itself.

In the Mexican crisis, President Clinton used his own authority to provide \$20 billion in U.S. assistance and after some arm-twisting got other countries to agree to a \$17.8 billion IMF package, the largest in the agency's 50-year history.

While there have been attempts by Republicans in Congress to revoke the U.S. assistance, the administration insists that recent favourable economic developments in Mexico prove the rescue package was the correct approach.

The Mexican crisis was precipitated last Dec. 20 when the country was forced to devalue its currency after investors became frightened and began cashing in their peso-denominated investments.

"The speed and size of today's global capital markets means the need for resources to halt such crises is greater than ever," Deputy Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers said on Friday.

But the administration concedes that it does not yet have donors lined up for the new emergency fund.

A senior IMF official, who briefed reporters on the upcoming meetings, said he expected formal approval of the emergency fund at the annual meeting. But he also predicted that the actual financing commitments would take several more months.

The official, who spoke on condition that his name not be used, said agreement was much closer on a separate initiative to provide an early-warning system to keep future Mexico-style crises from erupting.

The IMF is expected to adopt standards for public disclosure of basic economic information so that private investors will be better able to judge how a country is performing.

"If you want to avoid abrupt, irrational actions by the markets, then the thing you must provide is adequate information," the IMF official said.

The IMF proposal would call for all countries to report on a timely basis on key economic variables such as the level of currency reserves. In addition, 40 to 50 larger countries that have access to international capital markets would be asked to provide even more information covering as many as 20 key variables.

Iranian oil source doubts OPEC production cuts

ABU DHABI (R) — OPEC members should be ready to cut their production ceiling in 1996 to ensure market stability and shield prices even though no such move is now mooted, an Iranian oil source said on Sunday.

"Reducing production levels is not on the agenda for November" when the 12-nation group meets to discuss its policy for next year, said the source. "But member states should be willing to take major steps to guarantee market stability."

"If demand falls beneath OPEC's 24.52 million barrels per day (bpd) production ceiling it might be brought down. But I don't see that happening right now," the source added.

Iran, traditionally a price hawk, is OPEC's second largest producer with a 3.6 million bpd quota. At an oil meeting in Venezuela last week it said it would propose a formula to fellow OPEC members in November to defend market share and price.

Oil Minister Gholamreza Aghazadeh did not reveal that formula but did not rule out a possible increase next year in OPEC's current production ceiling.

OPEC ministers, who will meet in Vienna on Nov. 21, seem to have little room to manoeuvre. The group is plagued by soft oil prices, shrinking market share due to runaway oil production by non-OPEC exporters and quota-busting by OPEC members.

"OPEC countries don't have too much leverage to call on non-OPEC states to reduce production at this point. OPEC states are supposed to act in the interests of the organisation, but some don't," the Iranian oil source told Reuters.

OPEC's average June-August production has been about one million bpd above the ceiling fixed in 1993, a Reuters survey of oil industry officials and analysts showed.

Some OPEC ministers have said OPEC should maintain the output freeze at the next meeting, but others say it is premature to predict what will happen in November.

"Iran does not have a firm stand right now because that would mean its policy is rigid," said the oil source.

"This OPEC meeting should be guided by market forces. OPEC should be guided by realities in the market, not by trying to teach non-OPEC producers a lesson."

Czech republic, UAE to develop trade ties

DUBAI (R) — A business delegation from the Czech Republic is visiting the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to develop bilateral trade and encourage investment in the former eastern bloc country.

In a meeting with Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) officials on Sunday, the group of 30 Czech business people was urged to set up a trade centre in the UAE and to work towards the signing of a double taxation agreement.

"We need to avoid double taxation... we hope we shall have such an agreement signed between our two countries in the near future," DCCI Second Vice President Hassan Mohammad Bin Al Shaikh said.

Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Miroslav Somol, who led the Czech delegation, said: "It is a mutual goal to have these agreements as soon as possible," Mr. Somol said.

Trade between the Czech Republic and the UAE was \$24.9 million in 1994. Of this, Czech exports totalled \$20.7 million.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1995
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Richter Astrological Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Study your daily activities this morning and know how to become more efficient at them. Get together with good friends and loved ones tonight.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Make arrangements for enjoyment this morning and tonight get your surroundings beautified in some way which will benefit you largely.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Think more about your home and how you can best beautify it today and make it more comfortable for your loved ones. Buy a gift for a family tie.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) This is an ideal day for handling correspondence and communicating well with others of importance on the phone or in person for your success.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Handling practical and money matters which arise are easy during the daytime, then you can be off to fun places with good friends and loved ones.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Go after your personal aims today in a positive manner and gain them. Communicate well with your good friends and loved ones about any situations.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Get a plan working which will gain you a cherished personal wish today, then tonight you can join with friends you like very much.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Take a little time to be with good friends during the day today, but the evening should be spent with your mate in some loving moments.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You can advance quickly through public activities during the daytime today, but go after personal aims this evening which will bring you success.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Study into new interests which can help to make today and the future brighter and more successful for you, then be off to pleasure with good friends.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is a good day today for handling business matters with associates, but tonight get off to new places and people which will bring you success.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is a good day to come to a fine understanding with associates and then make sure to keep agreements which you have made, with influential associates.

Birthstone of October: Opal — Tourmaline

Lebanon seeks \$500m from World Bank

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon is seeking soft loans totalling \$500 million from the World Bank for rebuilding its war-damaged roads network, an official of the public works ministry said.

Samah Makarem, head of the ministry's roads department, told Reuters talks were under way between the government and World Bank representatives on its contribution to the project.

"According to my information, there are promises from the World Bank administration... to give assistance to the Lebanese government which may reach up to \$500 million to cover 50 per cent of the roads rehabilitation project," he said.

Mr. Makarem said the aid would be in the form of low-interest long-term loans over six years.

He put the total cost of the first phase of rehabilitating Lebanon's 6,300-km long road network at \$1 billion. The roads have been poorly maintained for years and some were badly damaged in the 1975-90 civil war.

THE Daily Crossword by Melvin Kenworthy

ACROSS

- 1 Titled lady
- 5 A Stevenson
- 10 Goes astray
- 14 Eye part
- 15 Cough and rain ends
- 16 Cookie
- 17 Song phrase
- 20 Urgent
- 21 Vaquero's rope
- 22 Before
- 23 Monk
- 25 Stick
- 29 Midding
- 30 Past
- 33 "... o'clock..."
- 34 "To fetch... ol..."
- 35 Sine — non
- 36 Tuchman opus
- 40 Koppel or Williams
- 41 Mexican fare
- 42 Fill up
- 43 Cal. abbr.
- 44 Captured
- 45 Cause
- 47 What's left
- 48 Part of a min.
- 49 Thorny bush
- 52 Waste away
- 57 "Seek —"
- 60 Elevator man
- 61 — work (road sign)
- 62 In addition
- 63 District
- 64 Bosc and Anjou
- 65 Loch —

DOWN

- 1 Jettison
- 2 Declare positively
- 3 Only
- 4 All — (very attentive)
- 5 Regard
- 6 Idle one
- 7 Protracted
- 8 Liable
- 9 Somewhat: suff.
- 10 Bulgarian city
- 11 La Douce
- 12 Orderly
- 13 Leguminous seed
- 18 North Sea feeder
- 19 Copper and tin alloy
- 23 Idles
- 24 — Minor
- 25 Malignant
- 26 Different
- 27 Obey
- 28 Sch. subj.
- 29 Ghost
- 30 Blue-greens
- 31 Enthusiasm
- 32 Like some grain
- 34 Tie
- 37 Says
- 38 Temple
- 39 Juliette Low's org.
- 45 Responds
- 46 "— homo"
- 47 Della of song
- 48 Villy
- 49 Josip —
- 50 Paper section, briefly
- 51 "The fat — the fire" (Heywood)
- 52 Best of fiction
- 53 "— old cowhand"
- 54 Proficient
- 55 — Trueheart
- 56 Love god
- 58 Demon
- 59 Born

Yesterday's puzzle solved:

A	F	A	R	B	A	B	A	S	P	L	A	N
S	E	R	A	E	L	I	H	I	A	O	N	E
T	A	C	T	G	O	F	A	R	D	O	D	O
A	T	H	I	N	G	O	F	F	E	A	U	T
F	I	E	F	F	L	A						
R	E	M	I	N	D	P	L	I	E	A	S	P
E	L	I	E			A	L	E	R	T	C	P
B	I	R	D	S	O	F	A	F	E	A	T	H
E	D	E		E	V	E	N	T			H	I
L	E	S		N	E	W	T		A	D	E	P
				D	O	R			E	D	I	T
A	B	I	R	D	I	N	T	H	E			H
A	V	I	V		A	B	A	T	E		I	G
L	O	N	E		T	A	T	E	R		N	A
E	N	D			E	R	O	S	E		G	R

Jordan Times Tel: 667171



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Herl Arnold and Mike Arpington

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TOPIA
LESIA
RAZABA
DANUSE

Answer here: THE

Yesterday's Jumbles: DANDY IMBUE SAFARI ENSIGN
Answer: These are handy to keep you in touch — FINGERS

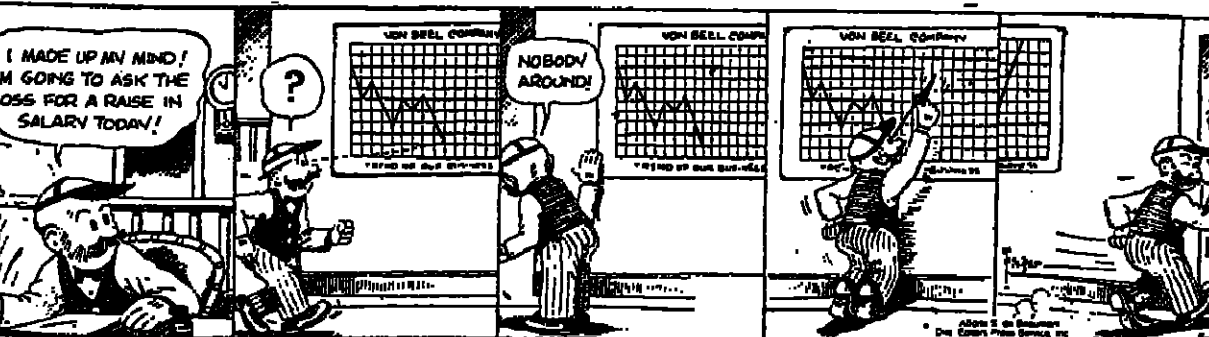
Peanuts



Andy Cap



Mutt'n'Jeff





Kristian Karembeu (L) of Sampdoria fights for the ball with Marco Sanna of Cagliari during their match October 1. Cagliari won the match over Sampdoria 2-1 (Reuters photo)

AC Milan and Bayern big guns are spiked

EUROPEAN SOCCER

PARIS (AFP) — AC Milan, Bayern Munich and Paris Saint Germain all tasted bitter defeat at the weekend.

The Italian superclub lost its unbeaten Serie A record, as did the Bavarians in the Bundesliga, while the Parisians saw their command of the French scene overturned.

That left Dutch side Ajax and Spanish pace-setters Espanol as the only clubs left with a 100 per cent winning record this campaign.

Milan, so impressive in Europe but deprived of the resting Dejan Savicevic on Sunday, crashed to a shock 1-0 defeat at Bari.

Carmine Gautieri's goal allowed Juventus and Napoli, who drew 1-1, to edge within a point of the Serie A leader.

Bayern, meanwhile, dis-

covered that seven wins in a row counted for nothing at reigning champions Borussia Dortmund.

Stefan Reuter scored at the ideal time, just before the break, to put the home side ahead and although Christian Nerlinger hit back immediately after the pause Sosa and Michael Zorc conjured up two goals inside three minutes to earn the points.

The result left the Bavarians on 21 points, while Borussia moved up to 17.

The Parisians, unlike Milan and Bayern, had been beaten once before this season but had to concede the head of the table to Metz after a 3-1 Sunday defeat at Lens in front of a 35,000 crowd.

Metz had won by the same

scoreline on Saturday against Auxerre, giving them 25 points to PSG's 23. Lens' win saw them move up to third on 22.

Those disasters had little effect on European champions Ajax, all but untouchable at the moment both at home and on the continent.

They strengthened their hold on the Dutch league with a 4-0 away drubbing of SC Heerenveen, their seventh win in a row.

Jari Litmanen, who scored a hat-trick in the European Champions League in midweek, and Patrick Kluijver were again their main executioners, each scoring a goal in a game that took the unbeaten Amsterdam club to 21 points, PSV Eindhoven, however, kept in touch with

a 3-0 defeat of Feyenoord. Brazilian Ronaldo on the scoresheet again just as he was last week.

In Spain, Espanol claimed a fifth win in a row, doing just enough against bottom club Racing Santander to earn a 1-0 home win and stay top on 15 points.

But that performance — and the match between champions Real Madrid and former champions Barcelona — was upstaged by Brazilian striker Bebeto.

He served up the individual performance of the weekend by cracking all five goals in Deportivo la Coruna's 5-0 win over Albacete — with four in the last six minutes.

Bebeto had opened his account after just two minutes of the match but it was not until the 84th that he

seemed to have put the game out of Albacete's reach. His next three goals followed in the 85th, 87th and 89th minutes, giving him eight goals for the season after just five games.

Real Madrid and Barcelona, who played the second half with 10 men after defender Sergi was sent off for a second booking, ended the game with a 1-1 stalemate.

Real will have been the unhappier side, after dominating most of the match. Dane Michael Laudrup set up his side's goal after just 12 minutes for the 18-year-old Raul to score. Barcelona's inspirational Bosnian striker Meho Kodro, however, matched him before half-time to set up Roger for the equaliser.

IOC, hockey's world ruling body give in to NHL conditions for Olympics

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — The International Olympic Committee and hockey's international ruling body gave in to all of the National Hockey League's (NHL) demands in order to have NHL players at the 1998 winter Olympics, the Swedish daily Svenska Dagbladet said Monday.

The newspaper, which acquired an advance copy of the agreement, to be announced Monday night in New York, said the NHL dictated its conditions to the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) and the IOC.

"It is possible that there will be some reactions from other federations within the Olympic organisation. But this is the deal we had to

give in in order to get all the NHL players," the president of the Swedish Ice Hockey Federation, Rickard Fagerlund, told the paper.

The NHL board of governors announced Sept. 29 that it would shut down the 1997-98 season for 16 days so league players might compete in Nagano, but the details of the deal were not announced.

According to Svenska Dagbladet, the main points of the deal are:

— The NHL decides the game schedule for Nagano. Players will arrive in Nagano Feb. 9 1998, with three training days before the first game is played Feb. 13. No game will be played Feb. 17, and the finals will be played Feb. 22.

— National team coaches must consult with either an NHL general manager, a current or former NHL coach, or a current or former NHL player before making team selections. At least 12 players must be named to the team before Aug. 1 1997, and the remaining players by Dec. 1, 1997. Selected players must not be used in national squad training games.

— The IIHF will pay insurance costs for all NHL players in Nagano.

— The IIHF will pay for all NHL players to fly first-class to Nagano, plus board and lodgings for one guest per NHL player.

Some ticket-holders will skip Atlanta

ATLANTA, Georgia (AFP) — Many people who received only a handful of the 1996 Olympic tickets they sought have decided they would rather skip the centennial games altogether than pay for a trip and see relatively little.

"We should have been associated with a big corporate sponsor. Then we would have been all right," lamented Chicago's Miles Zaremski.

He ordered more than one thousand dollars worth of seats, received tickets only for baseball and said he would give away the seats rather than spend more money on travel after the seating disappointment.

The story is common for those among the 300,000 ticket applicants who discovered in the past week they were getting little or none of the big-ticket seats they had sought.

Adding to the frustration was a 15-dollar non-

refundable application fee with every order.

"If somebody got tickets to horseshoes they got more than I did," said Georgia resident Brad Oliver, comparing the sports to a popular U.S. leisure game.

"Now I'm not going anywhere. And I probably won't even watch it on television."

Mike Swick went for wrestling, handball and second-level events figuring the basketball, swimming, athletics and gymnastics seats would be near impossible. So was what they wanted. They wound up with baseball, volleyball and paddling.

Now they may stay home. "I would like to experience the Olympics and see Atlanta but I don't know if I am going to make the expense to see what I don't really want to see."

Among the ticket failures

were the parents of 1992 Olympic gold medal winner Summer Sanders. They lost in the lottery process for swimming seats.

"It's embarrassing as a parent having to approach people asking for tickets. You feel like an absolute idiot," said Bob Sanders, father of the champion.

Olympic organisers ticket chairman Scott Anderson said 93 per cent of the 2,400 people who have sent back second-chance ticket forms for available events have bought more seats while only seven per cent have sought refunds.

"We have disappointed some people, but I don't think we have lost any," Anderson said.

"The Olympic spirit is going to shine through."

Injured Baggio out of Italian squad

ROME (R) — World Cup striker Roberto Baggio, suffering with a muscle injury, was left out of the Italian squad named Monday for next Sunday's important European championship qualifier against Group Four leaders Croatia.

Coach Arrigo Sacchi named an 18-man squad that yielded no surprises for the match in Split, where Italy will be seeking to avenge a 2-1 home defeat to Croatia last November.

That was the last time Baggio played for his country.

He was consigned to the substitute's bench during Italy's 1-0 win against Slovenia last month and was absent from the new selection after pulling a muscle in his left leg Sunday during league leaders AC Milan's shock 1-0 defeat at Bari.

Lazio striker Giuseppe

Signori, who is also injured, and team mate Pier Luigi Casiraghi's suspension further limited Sacchi's choices up front.

He opted again for Juventus striker Fabrizio Ravanelli, the scorer against Slovenia, and Gianfranco Zola of Parma and brought Milan's Marco Simone back into the squad.

Squad:

Goalkeepers — Angelo Peruzzi, Luca Bucci.

Defenders — Antonio Benarrivo, Ciro Ferrara, Luigi Apolloni, Paolo Maldini, Amedeo Carboni, Alessandro Costacurra.

Midfielders — Roberto di Matteo, Demetrio Albertini, Dino Baggio, Francesco Statuto, Angelo di Livio, Massimo Crippa, Alessandro di Piero.

Forwards — Gianfranco Zola, Marco Simone, Fabrizio Ravanelli

Rodman set for Jordan link-up

CHICAGO, Illinois (AFP) — Michael Jordan's next new teammate on the Chicago Bulls could be Dennis Rodman, the

unorthodox and controversial forward who led the National Basketball Association (NBA) in rebounds the past four seasons.

Jerry Reinsdorf, the club's chairman, said he has been in discussion with San Antonio about a deal for Rodman, who is

scheduled to make \$2.5 million this coming season in the final year of his contract.

The Bulls lost in the second round of last season's playoffs to Orlando, which was sparked by ex-Bull Horace Grant in addition to Shaquille O'Neal and Anfernee Hardaway.

Chicago lost their top rebounder when Grant departed to the Magic as a free agent and was unable to

regain the form which brought three championships.

Even Jordan's return could not recapture that peak. While he matched well with Scottie Pippen and Toni Kukoc, the rebounding void

once filled by Grant weakened the Bulls and showed in the playoffs.

Rodman is known more for dying his hair purple, orange and green and missing practices and games than his rebounding skill.

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Jordan Electricity Authority Advertisement Tender No. 128 / 1995

Jordan Electricity Authority declares the issue of Tender No. 128 / 95 for Telecommunication Systems for Jordan - Egypt Interconnection. The tender include the following equipment: power line carrier (PLC), teleprotection, private automatic exchanges, battery chargers, hot line telephone consoles and communication management system, on turn key basis.

This tender will be financed through a loan obtained by each of Arab Republic of Egypt and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development. Contractors who are interested to participate in this tender can obtain the tender documents from the Procurement Dept. at JEA main building located at Swafia, Zahran Street against a non-refundable amount of \$250 for one volume.

Bids are to be submitted to the secretary of tendering committee at the above address for both of the technical and financial offers accompanied by a bid bond equal to 2 per cent of the total value of the bid.

Submission of bids should be no later than 10 O'clock in the morning, Amman time on Monday, December 4th, 1995, and shall be opened publicly at 12 O'clock noon on the said date. The bids should be valid for 150 days from the closing date.

Tenderers are requested to submit any questions in writing or by cable to reach the Jordan Electricity Authority not later than two weeks before the closing date. Response shall be addressed to the specified tenderer's address.

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2nd prize: Inter-Sat satellite (KU-BAND-ART) 180 cm.
3rd prize: Inter-Sat satellite (KU-BAND) 150 cm.
4th prize: Microwave National (NN7853).
5th prize: Inter-Sat satellite (KU-BAND) 120 cm.
6th prize: Automatic washing machine National (NA950XLP).
7th prize: Video Panasonic - multi system + remote control.
8th prize: Stereo Panasonic - compact.
Prizes from 9 to 13: 20 inch colour TV - multi system + remote control.
14th prize: Vacuum cleaner National (MC 9028).
15th prize: Gift voucher - Leather Shop - value JD 150
16th prize: Return ticket to Beirut by MEA

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HERSCH

ORION Television Media Services, Inc.

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
482 07 06108763 44J92

Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?

A - If you count the singleton in partner's suit as two points and elect to bid two diamonds, don't be surprised if the bidding gets out of hand very quickly. You have neither the suit quality nor the strength for a two-over-one response, so bid one no trump.

Q. 2 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AK972 0A104 0KQ83 4J8

The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1A Pass 10 Pass
2A Pass 7 Pass

What do you bid now?

A - Since partner's club rebid denies a four-card major, there's no point in introducing your spade suit. However, don't make the mistake of bidding two no trump. That shows 11-12 points and invites partner to raise only with a better than minimum opening. Bid three no trump.

Q. 3 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKJ52 083 0844 48854

The bidding has proceeded:
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
1A 1NT 7 Pass

What do you bid now?

A - Partner's double asks you to take out to your best suit. It is not even close — bid two clubs. You have nowhere near enough defense to sit for one spade doubled, and are about an ace short for a response of one no trump; that is a forward-going action.

Q. 4 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
474 0KQJ10982 074 4AJ

The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
10 Pass 1A Pass
20 Pass 30 Pass

What do you bid now?

A - You want to play the hand in hearts and nowhere else, so it is about time you told partner your hearts are self-sustaining. Jump to four hearts. Since your initial rebid confirmed a minimum, partner cannot misconstruct this jump as showing more than you have.

Q. 5 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
473 0A439 0783 4KJ93

The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
10 1NT 7 1A

What do you bid now?

A - Had there been no enemy overcall, the best you could do would have been to issue a game invitation by raising to two no trump. West's intervention relieved North of the responsibility to rebid with a minimum balanced hand, so partner's voluntary action must show a holding that has improved on the auction. Raise to three no trump.

Q. 6 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
4108 083 0A4J983 4887

Partner opens the bidding one no trump. What do you respond?

A - If you have a mechanism for finding out whether partner has a high diamond honor, by all means use it. If you do not, simply jump to three no trump. Your diamond suit rates to produce five or six tricks, and that should give partner an excellent shot at game.

TODAY AT

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& Jessica Lange... in

Rob Roy

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CINEMA TEL: 699238
PLAZA

Sandra Bullock
& Bill Pullman
in

While You Were Sleeping

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL: 677420
CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
Adel Imam & Yusra
Birds of the Darkness
(Arabic)

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:45

CONCORD "2"

POLICE ACADEMY
"MISSION TO MOSCOW"
Shows: 4, 6, 8, 10

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U.N. agencies appeal for assistance to Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — U.N. agencies that have been predicting a humanitarian catastrophe in Iraq will try on Tuesday to persuade foreign donors to substantially increase their recent levels of help.

The agencies are alarmed that more than half way through the current fiscal year they have received only about a quarter of the \$183 million they expected — and they had requested less than in previous years.

"Donors have so many other places to put their aid," said Viktor Wahlroos, deputy coordinator in Baghdad of U.N. agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) that aid Iraq. "Iraq is forgotten."

The aid groups have prepared the ground for the one-day meeting in Geneva by a series of dramatic warnings portraying Iraq as hovering on the edge of disaster five years after all its trade was banned over its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"Living conditions remain precarious for at least an estimated 4 million people," Mr. Wahlroos told Reuters. That is 20 per cent of the population and includes 2.6 million children under the age of five and 600,000 pregnant or nursing mothers.

While health statistics show the rate of deterioration has slowed since jumps in the first two years of sanctions, U.N. officials are convinced a drastic change for the worse is about to appear.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, facing sanctions until the U.N. Security Council believes he has fulfilled terms set after the 1991 Gulf war, slashed rations to his population exactly a year ago.

According to U.N. estimates, rations of items such as flour and sugar that previously met 70 per cent of basic needs of the population now provide less than half the necessary daily nutrition.

The rest must be purchased with Iraq dinars, which have collapsed in value. A dollar that bought less than a third of a dinar in 1990 now buys well over 2000 dinars on the street. A professor's monthly salary of about 6,000 dinars would buy a single breakfast at the government's shop-piece Al Rasheed hotel.

Despite that, U.N. officials know it will not be easy to secure extra funds in Geneva. Subhash Das Gupta, head of UNICEF in Iraq, said the most likely outcome was some pledges of future assistance, some countries deferring any action and, hopefully, a few firm commitments.

"There is donor fatigue," said Mr. Das Gupta.

Iraq's economic links to the rest of the world have been cut off for five years and there is no end in sight to the total ban on Iraqi exports and the ban on all imports except food and medicine.

Meanwhile, other international concerns — from refugee problems in Africa to the desire to shore up Palestinian self-rule — are claiming the attention and funds of donor nations.

Donors may also have to be persuaded that increasing aid is the solution. Some earlier predictions of disaster did not come true and Iraq also has permission to sell a limited amount of oil — under U.N. terms that have so far been rejected — to pay for food imports.

That is a reminder of the United Nations' unusual dual role in Iraq.

It enforces sanctions, imposed to ensure the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. Rolf Ekeus, the U.N. official implementing the arms control programme, left Baghdad on Sunday after his latest round of talks saying that problems remained.

But in the same building in Baghdad that houses the U.N. arms experts, the aid agencies are appealing for funds to combat the hardships caused by the sanctions.

Regent urges coordination, linkage in education among Arab countries

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Monday called for inter-Arab dialogue to upgrade the education in the Arab World.

Addressing the opening session of a pan-Arab educational conference at the University of Jordan, Prince Hassan stressed that the educational development and reform in Jordan should be linked with the development of human resources and the development of land's resources.

In his address to the conference entitled "Preparing Arab Teachers for the 21st Century," Prince Hassan called on the Arab World to coordinate and link educational programmes.

Urging educationists to interact with the changes taking place in the region, he said: "Development of the

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His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Monday attends a conference on education and teachers in the Arab World (photo by Boghos)

French N-test ignites renewed world condemnation, but Paris is unruffled

Combined agency dispatches

FRANCE was again the target of a wave of global outrage of Monday after it ignored world opinion and exploded the second and possibly biggest of its new series of nuclear weapons tests in the South Pacific.

The fiercest condemnation came from Pacific-rim nations Japan, Australia and New Zealand, while the United States, another nuclear power, also criticised the test, calling it regrettable.

European Union (EU) foreign ministers also voiced their disappointment, but were at a loss about what to do next.

The French government was unruffled. Prime Minister Alain Juppe would only repeat that the tests were harmless to the environment and would be the last before France signed a global nuclear weapons test ban.

"We are continuing our testing campaign in the conditions and within the limits set by the president of the republic," he said in terse comments to reporters.

Gaullist Deputy Jacques Baumel, who is vice-president of the National Assembly's defence committee, said France would hold the third nuclear test in early

November. Mr. Baumel, who was speaking in the National Assembly lobby, said he had no official information, but that the French programme provided for a test per month and "I think that early in November, there will be a third test."

Mr. Baumel said he was "no prophet" and was "not party to defence secrets," but affirmed that the 110-kilotonne test carried out on Fangataufa atoll Sunday was "aimed at validating for the last time" the TN-75 warhead which will be installed on France's new generation of strategic nuclear submarines from next summer.

The deputy had predicted on Sept. 22 that the second test would be staged in Fangataufa "in eight to ten days" to test the TN-75 nuclear warhead.

Mr. Baumel repeated that the test series had three aims — verifying the reliability of existing weapons, testing the TN-75 and preparing laboratory simulation of tests.

Earlier, Mr. Baumel accused unidentified groups from the United States, Australia and New Zealand of funding the environmental group Greenpeace to pressure France.

He said such groups were exploiting sincere Green-

peace activists for commercial and political purposes.

"Greenpeace is an extraordinary mix of well-meaning people: old protestant women, cool young things, very friendly young people," he told the France-Inter radio station.

"But at the same time behind this there are people who are pursuing a determined policy with considerable means... and who gives these means?" he said.

The French defence ministry said the blast was detonated beneath Fangataufa in French Polynesia at 12:30 a.m. Paris time (2330 GMT on Sunday).

The blast was some five times more powerful than the U.S. atomic bomb dropped on Japan's Hiroshima in 1945.

"The United States regrets this action. We continue to urge all of the nuclear powers including France to refrain from future tests and to join in a global moratorium (on testing)," White House spokesman Mike McCurry said in a statement.

But Paris was not the lone target for criticism, with both Australia and New Zealand also hitting out at Britain for refusing to speak out against French testing.

It was the second in a series of six to eight tests breaking

France's three-year-old moratorium on nuclear tests. The first, a far smaller blast at France's main Mururoa atoll test site, also unleashed a tide of world condemnation and sparked violent riots in Tahiti.

Tahiti was calm but tense in the aftermath of the latest test. But pro-independence groups warned that it could ignite a violent rampage aimed at French expatriates. More than 800 gendarmes have been deployed in Papeete to quell any repeat of rioting that followed the first blast.

Japan, Australia and New Zealand all summoned French ambassadors on Monday to voice opposition to the testing.

Japan's Foreign Minister Yohei Kono told Ambassador Jean-Bernard Ouvrier he "strongly regretted that you do not understand Japan's consistent position on this matter," and demanded France halt the testing.

New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger, in a statement, said: "New Zealanders are outraged that once again France is thumbing its nose at world opinion."

Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen said she had hoped that the reaction

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Rabin remains defiant against critical Jewry

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said on Sunday American Jews opposed to Middle East peace moves should stop interfering in his government's policies.

Mr. Rabin spoke to reporters on the way home from the United States where he signed an accord with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) at a White House ceremony of expanding Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank.

"Those who don't send their daughters and sons to the army (in Israel)... have no moral right to take action against the policy of a democratically-elected government," Mr. Rabin told reporters on his plane as it was about to land at Tel Aviv airport.

He said some American Jewish in "fringe groups" had been active in the U.S. Congress to undermine the accord, in which Israel agreed to pull its troops out of Palestinian population centres in the West Bank to allow for Palestinian elections.

Mr. Rabin's opponents in Israel and the U.S. are against ceding any part of the West Bank.

Mr. Rabin renewed his attack in remarks broadcast Monday U.S. Jews had "no moral right" to lobby in Washington against the peace agreements.

"This is unprecedented and sets of a warning signal in terms of our relations with U.S. Jewry in the future," Mr. Rabin came under attack over the weekend

when he was critical in a meeting with Jewish leaders in New York City on Friday.

Mr. Rabin complained then that donations from American Jews were dwindling. He also denounced as "loathsome" a Jewish group that urged Congress not to grant U.S. aid to the cash-strapped Palestinian self-rule government.

Avraham Burg, a leading figure in Mr. Rabin's Labour Party, said the prime minister had made a "mistake of historic proportions" with his attack on American Jews. Mr. Burg heads the quasi-governmental Jewish Agency, which works to bring Jewish immigrants to Israel and has close ties with diaspora Jews.

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, a Jewish settler leader who immigrated from the United States 13 years ago, said the government was acting in an undemocratic manner.

He noted that parliament would only get a chance to vote on the autonomy accord on Thursday, a week after it was signed.

"You cannot ask American Jewry to give money and not give their opinions about the most basic things," Mr. Riskin said.

Earlier this year Mr. Rabin likened some U.S. rabbis to "ayatollahs" after they joined a call on soldiers to refuse orders to evacuate army bases in the West Bank.

Israeli men do a compulsory three years of army service beginning at age 18. Women are drafted for two years.

Assad, Mubarak to meet on peace

CAIRO (Agencies) — The presidents of Syria and Egypt are to meet soon to explore ways of getting Syrian-Israeli peace talks moving again.

Egyptian Information Minister Safwat Al Sherif said Monday. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak told U.S. officials in Washington that it was now "important to unblock Israeli-Syrian negotiations" after attending the signing of an Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy deal at the White House last Thursday, Mr. Sherif said.

"He will soon meet (Syrian President) Hafez Al Assad to carry out consultations on this subject," Mr. Sherif told the government daily Al Ahrar Al Massali, without saying where the meeting would take place.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, meanwhile, said there would be a meeting "soon" between Israel and Syria without giving a date.

Mr. Arafat, speaking during a visit to Senegal on Sunday, also said he hoped for progress in Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese negotiations leading to a "concrete accord and a just and lasting peace throughout the region."

U.S. President Bill Clinton "assured me he is going to do everything to ensure Israel negotiates with Syria and Lebanon," Mr. Arafat said.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is expected to meet this week in Washington with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharras to discuss ways of breaking the deadlock in Israeli-Syrian talks.

After years of stop-start negotiations with U.S. envoys acting as go-betweens, the talks ground to a halt in June with both sides failing to agree on security arrangements to accompany an Israeli withdrawal on the Golan Heights.

Syrian Defence Minister Mustafa Tias has said Syria was still committed to peace in the region but wanted the return of all of the Golan Heights before it could make peace with Israel.

Official sources said General Tias, attending the opening of a military course on Sunday, denounced the PLO-Israeli deal signed last week in Washington for Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank as a "capitulation."

"Tias assured Syria was committed to the comprehensive and just peace... and that Syria can not accept a peace that would not return the lands and rights," one source said.

"Syria will not abandon a span of its home land," one source quoted Gen. Tias as saying.

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Sudan: No early thaw in relations with U.S.

DOHA (Agencies) — The president of Sudan, a country listed by the United States as alleged sponsor of terrorism, said Monday that an early thaw in Khartoum's relations with Washington appears unlikely.

"Our relations with Washington are tense and the Americans are responsible for this," President Omar Hassan Al Bashir told reporters before wrapping up a two-day visit here.

"We don't expect an improvement in relations in the immediate future," he said.

Lieutenant-General Bashir blasted what he said were U.S. efforts to condemn Sudan at international forums, and for stopping all aid to his impoverished country.

He said the United States had threatened to fight Khartoum by heightening tensions between Sudan and neighbouring Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda.

Gen. Bashir said his government was spending about \$1 million a day in its war against rebels in southern Sudan.

He rejected Ethiopian accusations that Sudan had mobilised troops along the

border.

Saying there were more than one million Eritrean refugees living in Sudan, he said Khartoum would not evict them as a "refugee weapon" against Ethiopia or Eritrea.

Gen. Bashir also blamed Israel and the United States for the civil war.

Gen. Bashir, speaking to the Sudanese community in Qatar, said: "The enemies are trying to undermine Sudan by using the issue of the south."

"Some parties don't want to see peace secured," he added, naming the United States, Israel, Britain and other external and internal forces.

"We are trying to resolve this question by two means, one political and the other military," Gen. Bashir said. Government forces have succeeded in restricting the rebellion to small pockets in the south, he said.

Qatar has been mediating in Sudan's efforts to mend ties with the rest of the oil-rich Gulf Arab states. Those relations have been strained ever since Sudan sympathised with

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American airports on high security alert after guilty verdict in bombing plot trial

WASHINGTON (AP) — Airports nationwide are stepping up precautions against attacks to the highest level since the 1991 Gulf war. No specific threats were cited, but a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) official said Monday: "We're planning for the worst."

Transportation Secretary Federico Pena issued the order Sunday after a group of militants were convicted in a New York trial. "Based on several current and future events, more security measures are now warranted," Mr. Pena said.

Security was noticeably tighter at the White House. Pedestrians were blocked from Pennsylvania Avenue, which already this year was closed to motor vehicles for security.

"We always review the security environment both for U.S. installations abroad and U.S. government facilities

here at home when the environment suggests it's smart to do that," a presidential spokesman Mike McCurry said.

He said last week's signing of a Middle East peace agreement at the White House, the New York verdict and other events "legitimately cause the United States to look at the status of its security."

Stepped-up security was evident at Dulles International Airport outside Washington. Travellers on a New York-bound flight had to produce picture identification when checking bags at the curb and again when picking up seat assignments.

They also were asked at both locations whether others had handled their baggage and if they had packed it themselves.

At Newark International Airport in New Jersey, where Pope John Paul II arrives Wednesday for a five-day

U.S. visit, no changes in security were visible Monday, but security has been at a heightened state since Aug. 13. That alert was based on a federal warning that radicals might be planning a car bombing at nearby John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York.

On Aug. 9, Mr. Pena ordered a "heightened state of alert" for transportation facilities nationwide after President Bill Clinton requested a review of airport security procedures.

At the time, the administration refused to reveal details of any threats. But the newspaper Newsday reported the FBI had intelligence reports that two groups — the Palestinian Hamas and the Iran-backed Hizbollah — were planning a "suicide massacre."

James Kallstrom, chief of the FBI's New York office, said Monday the current

security measures were aimed at no specific threat. He said the FBI and the State Department "have threats all the time, hundreds of phone calls, letters."

Mr. Kallstrom said on television that he did not know whether an attack is likely but added: "We're planning for the worst."

He said he "absolutely" expects threats to security to increase but noted that due to increased security measures including more careful ID and baggage checks, "This might be the safest time" to travel.

At Dulles and Washington's other main airport, National, the new measures meant cars left curbside at the terminal might be towed and check-in lines might move more slowly, a spokeswoman said.

"We don't expect too

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No serious backlash expected in Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — Despite his following among Islamic militants, the conviction of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman will have few repercussions in Egypt, Muslim activists said.

But one of his attorneys in Cairo condemned the verdict, calling it a "political trial for political thought."

"Omar Abdul Rahman had no hand in any of these attacks, neither in organising them or executing them," said Abdul Halim Mandour, who has known the Egyptian cleric since 1979. "He is not a terrorist. He is a thinker and a man of religion."

Mr. Mandour predicted there would be anger, but other Muslim activists discounted the chance for violence. Militants of Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah, or the Islamic Group, many of whom con-

sider Sheikh Abdul Rahman their spiritual leader, have carried out hit-and-run attacks since 1992 in an attempt to topple the government.

"He has followers, he has supporters, but I don't think it will cause commotion," said Mamoun Al Hodeibi, a spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's largest Islamic group.

The Brotherhood claims tens of thousands of followers in Egypt but has disavowed violence. The government has cracked down on it since January, accusing it of having ties with the Islamic Group.

Other supporters of Abdul Rahman said they did not expect a backlash, particularly since the government has largely confined the insurgen-

cy to the group's traditional stronghold in the south.

"There will be nothing. The circumstances won't allow it," said Montassar Al Zayat, another attorney for Sheikh Abdul Rahman.

Security appeared normal at the sprawling U.S. embassy in downtown Cairo. A handful of guards standing along the embassy's walls said they had not heard of the conviction. Three pickup trucks carrying about 10 soldiers with rifles were parked across the street, but they said they report there every night.

"I haven't heard anything about the trial," said one of the black-uniformed soldiers, who as is customary refused to give his name. "I've been listening to the soccer match on the radio."

The embassy issued a warning in July urging the thousands of Americans in Egypt to be careful as the trial approached a verdict. An embassy spokesman said Sunday that the embassy had received threats last month, but declined to give details.

He said no private U.S. citizens had been threatened. The trial had received little attention in Egypt. State-owned radio and television virtually ignored the case, and the daily newspapers only rarely put the trial on their front pages.

The verdict Sunday received similar treatment, mentioned at the end of the evening news. Early editions of state-owned newspapers carried it briefly on the front page.

COLUMN

Norway royals cut down on smoking at the palace

OSLO (AFP) — Norway's King Harald V and Queen Sonja will no longer offer cigarettes at official receptions at the royal palace and at least one room will be smoke-free at official dinners, the palace has announced. The changes are being made to keep the palace up-to-date with Norwegian smoking laws, royal reception secretary Magne Hagen said. King Harald V is a smoker.

U.S. singers raise money for poor farmers

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky (R) — Some of America's top musicians joined forces Sunday in a concert to raise money for struggling, small family farmers. Concert organisers said about 50,000 people crammed into Cardinal Stadium in Louisville to see a line-up of stars including rockers Neil Young and John Mellencamp and the band Hootie and the Blowfish. Country singer Willie Nelson, president of Farm Aid, said the farming crisis of the 1980's was still alive 10 years later in America. "This is not a celebration," Nelson told a news conference before the concert, which raised more than \$1 million in ticket sales. "This is a black eye on America that we had to do Farm Aid once. We're not here to celebrate, we're here to tell you there's a problem. Not only is it still here, it's worse than it was," he added. Nelson estimated about 500 family farmers went out of business every week, adding that Farm Aid had distributed more than \$12 million to farming organisations across America. Farm Aid began in 1985 when Nelson and rockers Young and Mellencamp held their first concert. Young urged President Bill Clinton to veto efforts by Congress to cut support to family farmers. "Help needs to go to people who care about the land and who don't want to destroy the land by overworking it — not to people pushing pencils in New York City," Young said.

Thai rape victim kills attacker with bra

BANGKOK (R) — A young woman in an eastern Thai town used her bra to strangle a man whom she accused of raping her, police said Monday. Police said the 19-year-old woman told them she was travelling on the back of a motorcycle taxi near the town of Sirachan when the driver stopped and dragged her into a nearby wood and raped her. As the driver rested after the attack, she picked up her bra, which had been torn off, and strangled him, police quoted the woman as saying.

3 hikers survive 13 days trapped in cave

BEIJING (AP) — A man and his two young nephews were rescued 13 days after getting lost in an underground cave without any food, the official Xinhua News Agency said Saturday. Sun Zhongfu, 22, and his nephews, 10-year-old Li Chengqing and 12-year-old Li Wanguan, wandered into the limestone cave with a candle but it soon went out. Xinhua said. They were unable to find the exit in the darkness. They survived by drinking water from a stream, the report said. It said they were "thin but in good spirits." Xinhua said five men fishing in a stream in the cave on Sept. 22 heard the trio's weak cries for help.